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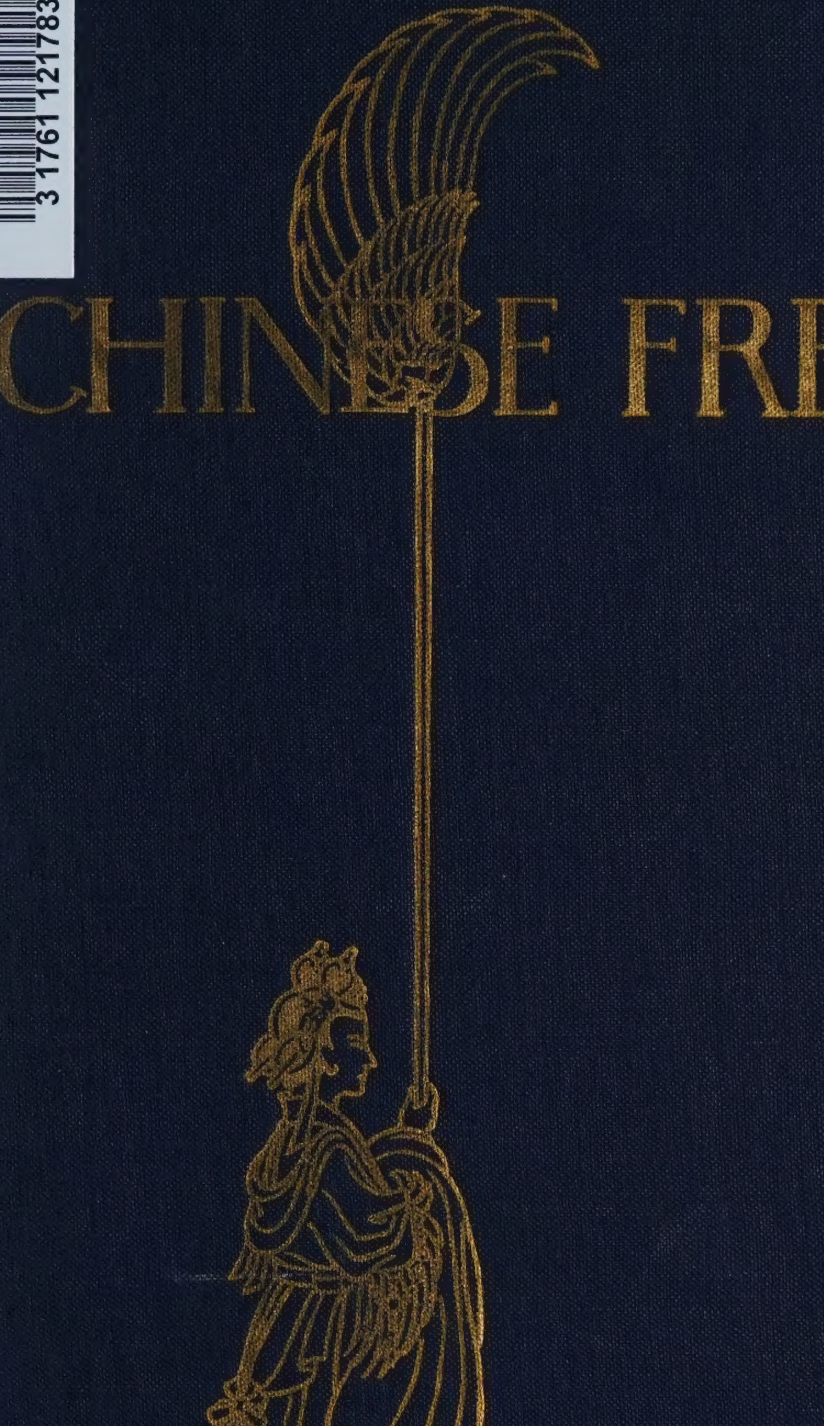
CHINESE FRESCOES



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CHINESE
TEMPLE FRESCOES

Frontispiece

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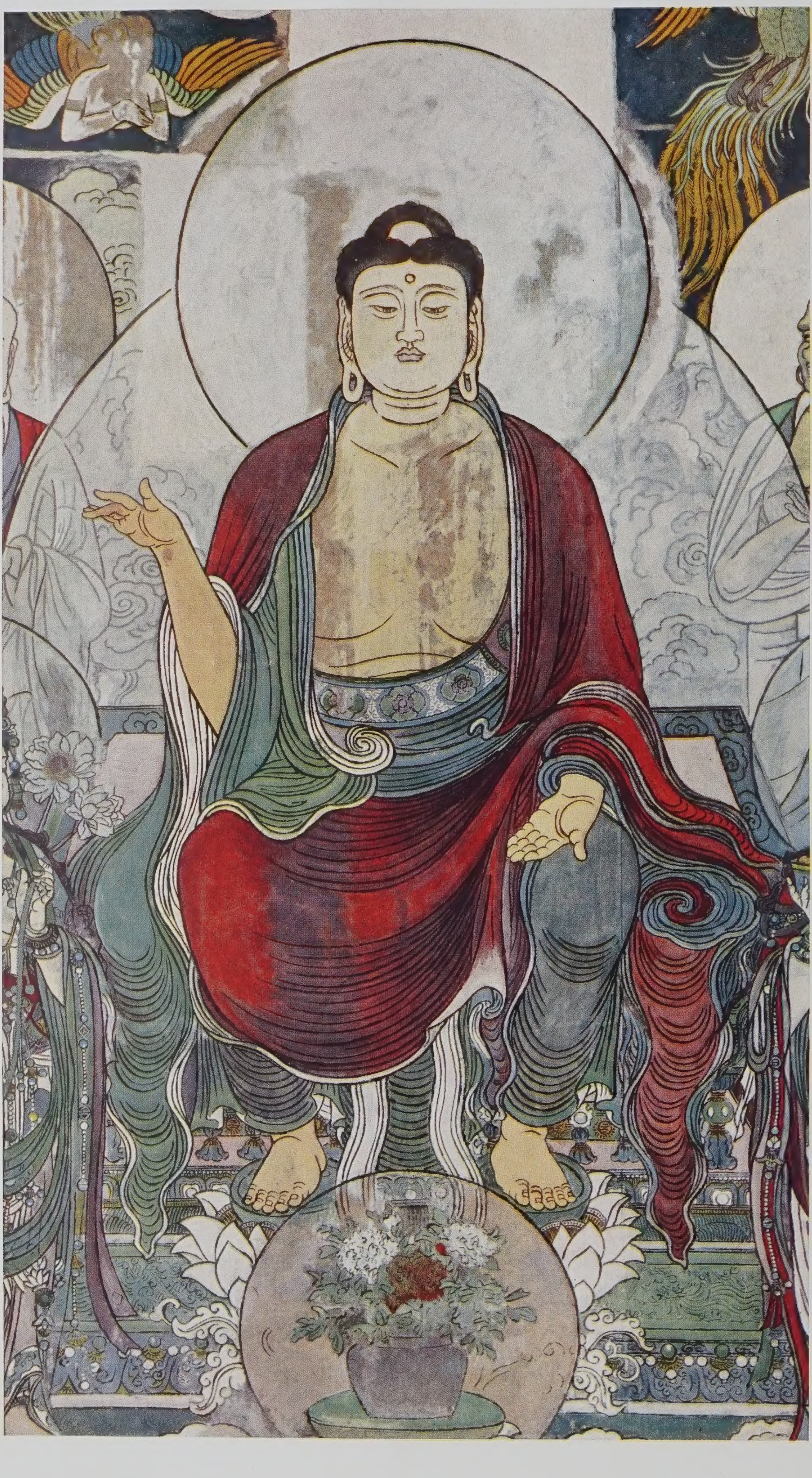

HU CHIU SHAN

See! There stands the temple
Where I worship,
Its tower pointing skyward,
High storey heaped on storey,
The great shrine of Hu Chiu Shan.

Watching from my window
In the darkness,
When all is peace and silence,
I see the oil lamps burning
To the gods of Hu Chiu Shan.

When on the altar
Burns sweet incense,
I know Great Buddha will bless me,
For gold and jewels I have given
To the priests of Hu Chiu Shan.

Poetess: Hsüeh Lan-ying
Yüan Dynasty, A.D. *1280-1368*
The Hundred Names: H. H. Hart

中國壁畫

懷履光 偉廉

CHINESE
TEMPLE FRESCOES

A Study of Three
Wall-paintings of the
Thirteenth Century

By WILLIAM CHARLES WHITE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS, 1940

MUSEUM STUDIES—NUMBER THREE

This series is published by the Royal
Ontario Museum of Archaeology
through the generosity of the
Rockefeller Foundation

FIRST EDITION
1940

COMPANION VOLUMES

Number One: *Tomb Tile Pictures of Ancient China, 1939.*
Number Two: *An Album of Chinese Bamboos, 1939.*

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1940

TO
MRS. SARAH TRUMBULL WARREN, O.B.E., LL.D.
VICE-CHAIRMAN,
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

PREFACE

THIS third volume in the series of Museum Studies is concerned with three large temple frescoes, now in the Chinese Collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, which originally came from South Shansi, and are considered as dating to the thirteenth century A.D.

It must be re-stated that these Studies are based on objects or material in the collections of the Museum, mainly with the general public in mind, and for this reason data of a technical nature, or extensive foot-notes and references, are kept at a minimum. This treatment leaves an opening for criticism from experts, but if the public of the West are the better enabled to comprehend the background and associations of these museum objects in a generally accurate manner, and are stimulated to further and more extensive inquiry thereby, then this popular objective and method must be considered as worth while.

It will also be apparent from the Study that the source-material drawn upon is almost entirely to be found in Western books and journals, and since these are accessible in our libraries, readers who desire to do so may explore the subject further for themselves.

For this reason the task has consisted mainly in gathering together and co-ordinating information already available through the labours of others, thus avoiding wasteful and unnecessary duplication for a subject of this kind. The names of the main sources are given in the text, and we take this opportunity of acknowledging, with sincere gratitude, our indebtedness to these writers, and to many others besides, for bits of information here and there.

No attempt has been made to deal with the frescoes from the standpoint of art—this must be left to those more competent to do so.

We are deeply indebted to the following for advice and help on various points: Dr. P. M. Millman, Department of Astronomy, University of Toronto (who also prepared the star maps, Fig. 27, and the sun-dial diagram, Fig. 21A); Dr. A. W. Hummel, Library of Congress, Washington; Mr. Laurence Sickman, William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City; Mrs. A. W. B. Hewitt, General Editor in the University of Toronto Press; the *Illustrated*

London News (for permission to reproduce the coloured plates from *I.L.N.*, October 22, 1938); Mr. K. Tanaka, General Manager, Yamanaka & Co., New York, and various others who have been most generous in their help.

The colour work of the frontispiece and the other coloured plates was done by Miss Dorothy MacDonald of the Museum staff, who also designed and drew the front cover, the title page, the map, and most of the line drawings (Figs. 18, 19C, 24, 26, 31, 45, and 61), and whose assistance and advice have been of the greatest value.

We also acknowledge with gratitude our obligation to the following for illustrations: Mr. Laurence Sickman (Fig. 3A); Major A. J. Todd (Fig. 3B); The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Figs. 21A and B); the *Chin-shih-so* (Figs. 19A and B, and 22A); The British Museum (Fig. 25); Otsuka Kogeisha, Tokyo (Fig. 17); and Miss W. Needler of the Museum staff (Figs. 32, 46, and 52).

It might be thought unnecessary to give the outline of part of the report of the two Shansi students (*chap.* VI), but in spite of certain errors of transcription in their report, the descriptions of the temples as they saw them have a value, as also the photographs which accompanied their report (Figs. 1, 2A and B, 4, 5, and 6).

The blocks were made by Rapid Grip and Batten, Ltd.; the coloured plates were printed by Miln-Bingham Print-craft, Ltd.; while the typography, printing, and binding were done by the University of Toronto Press.

W. C. W.

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PART I

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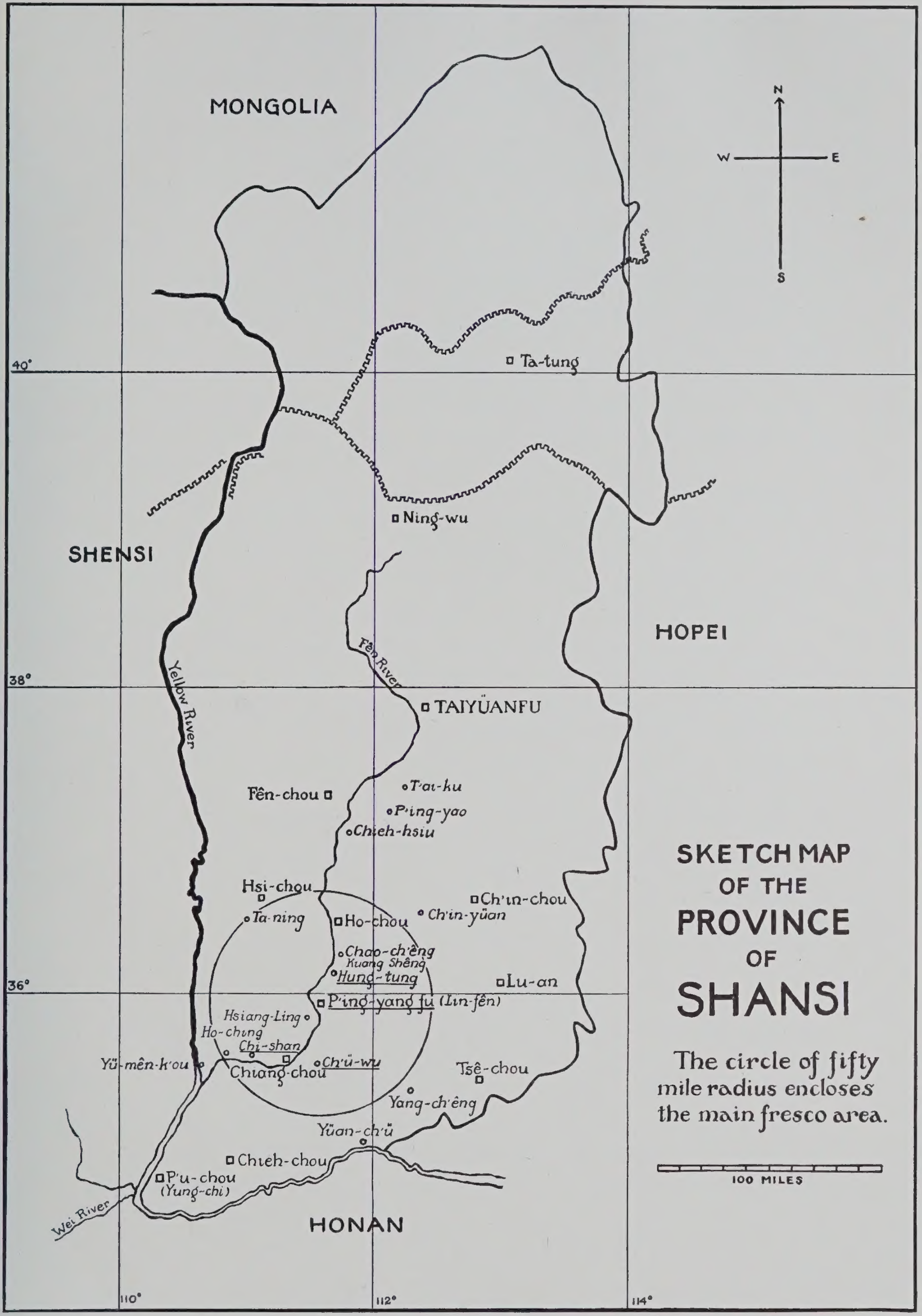

MONGOLIA
N
W
E
S
Ta-tung
40°
Ning-wu
SHENSI
HOPEI
Fên River
38°
TAIYÜANFU
Yellow River
Fên-chou
T'ai-ku
P'ing-yao
Chieh-hsiu
Hsi-chou
Ch'in-chou
Ta-ning
Ho-chou
Ch'in-yüan
Chao-ch'êng
Kuang Shêng
Hung-tung
Lu-an
36°
P'ing-yang fu (Lin-fên)
Hsiang-Ling
Ho-ching
Chi-shan
Yü-mên-k'ou
Ch'ü-wu
Chiang-chou
Tsê-chou
Yang-ch'êng
Yüan-ch'ü
Chieh-chou
P'u-chou
(Yung-chi)
Wei River
HONAN
100 MILES
110°
112°
114°

SKETCH MAP OF THE PROVINCE OF SHANSI

The circle of fifty mile radius encloses the main fresco area.

I

CHINESE WALL-PAINTINGS

IN the year 518 B.C., when Confucius was about thirty-three years of age, he expressed a desire to visit the Court of Chou, which was then in the capital city of Lo, the present Old Loyang of Honan Province, and there confer with Lao Tzu, the reputed founder of Taoism, who was then a treasury official at the court. The Duke of Ch'ao, in whose dukedom Confucius was living, hearing of this desire, placed a carriage and a pair of horses at the Master's disposal, and he forthwith proceeded to Lo.

He kept rather to himself while at the court, and concerned himself mainly with enquiring into the matter of ceremonies and music, and the maxims and exploits of the founders of the dynasty.

His interview with Lao Tzu seemed to have left him in a maze. "There is the dragon," he said. "I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds, and rises to heaven. Today I have seen Lao Tzu, and can only compare him to a dragon."

On the other hand, his experiences and enlightenment in the matter of court ceremony and equipment greatly delighted him. He explored the grounds set apart for the annual sacrifices to Heaven and Earth; inspected the lay-out of the Hall of Light, where audiences were given to the princes of the empire; and examined all the arrangements of the Ancestral Temple, and the court functions in general. From the whole he received a profound impression. "Now," said he with a sigh, "I know the deep wisdom of Chou Kung, and how the house of Chou attained to the imperial sway."

On the walls of the Hall of Light were paintings of the ancient sovereigns from Yao and Shun downwards, their characters appearing in the representations of them, and words of praise or warning being appended. There was also a picture of Chou Kung, the Duke of Chou, sitting with his infant nephew, the king Ch'êng, upon his knees, to give audience to all the princes. Confucius surveyed the scene with silent delight, and then said to his followers: "Here you see how Chou became so great. As we use a mirror to examine the forms of objects, so must we study the ancients in order to understand the present" (*cp. The Family Sayings,—Chia Yü, chap. 2,—Legge's Classics, vol.* I, *p. 66: traditional and apocryphal*).

This is one of the earliest references to Chinese temple wall-paintings, for doubtless the pictures on the walls of the Hall of Light, which delighted Confucius, were historical frescoes of past rulers and traditional and legendary episodes, such as Chinese frescoes have depicted down through the centuries. These early frescoes of the time of Confucius would, of course, have nothing of Buddhism in them, for that religion did not come into China until several centuries later; but famous rulers and personages of ancient days, mythological beings, astrological lore, and legendary tale, would all be brought into these wall-pictures, just as they have been included in the three frescoes of this study.

Early in the second century of this era, a young poet by the name of Wang Yen-shou, was taken on a visit to the province of Shantung. There he visited the famous palace of Ling Kuang, which had been built in the second century B.C. by a prince of the royal house. In the troubles that took place at the beginning of the first century, when the Western Han gave place to the Eastern Han Dynasty, the magnificent palaces of most of the important cities were destroyed, but this Ling Kuang Palace escaped the common fate and stood as a symbol of the glories of the Western Han.

The young poet was deeply impressed with the palace, and wrote a poem which he called "The Ling Kuang Palace at Lu." In the poem he particularly described the wall-paintings of the great hall of the palace. He records that on the walls the outlines of ancient heroes seemed to flicker and hover like spirits of the dead personages they represented. There were Jên Huang the Ruler of Men, and Fu Hsi and Nü Wo standing out in striking form, and Huang Ti the Yellow Emperor, and those of T'ang and Yü of the happy era of Yao and Shun, each robed in stately splendour. The Three Nobles (*San Hou*), those loyal ministers Po I, the Great Yü who chained the flood waters of the River, and Chi the farmers' friend, were also there. Faithful ministers, filial sons, mighty heroes, and virtuous women,—all were to be seen in the frescoes of the Ling Kuang Palace, and were mentioned by Wang in his poem (*"The Ling Kuang Palace at Lu"; trans. by A. Waley, The Temple and Other Poems: Allen & Unwin, 1923*).

No trace of the Ling Kuang Palace remains today, but not far away lie the ruins of the Wu Liang Tz'u tombs, with stones in sculptured relief depicting scenes legendary and historical, military and ceremonial, such as might have been painted on the walls of the Ling Kuang Palace. There are two groups of these tomb-reliefs, one series bearing the date of A.D. 129, and the other that of A.D. 149, and they may be taken as being contemporaneous with the visit of the poet to the near-by palace, and characteristic of the wall-paintings of that period (*Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale; E. Chavannes, 1909-1915*).

In the Eastern Han History (A.D. 25-221), and the histories of succeeding dynasties, there is frequent mention of portraits, and paintings of historical incidents. Chang Shou, who was a painter in the Chin Dynasty (A.D. 265-420), is "noted for a series of frescoes painted in the ceremonial hall dedicated to Chou Kung at Ch'êng-tu, the capital of Ssuch'uan. These were portraits of Confucius and his seventy-two disciples, of the Three Emperors and the Five Rulers of mythological days, and of all the saints and sages down to the Han Dynasty. We are told that 'the glory of these filled the hall, and that the ceremonies and music of ten thousand generations were thus placed at the disposition of students' " (*Chinese Pictorial Art; Giles, London, 1918*).

Another inspirational source for themes for wall-paintings was provided when Buddhism entered China, additional to that of the Classics and the Histories. "It is recorded that the famous fourth-century artist, Ku K'ai-chih, first made a name for himself by painting a mural of the Buddhist saint Vimalakīrti (Wei Mo Ch'i). He had put his name down for a million *cash* as his subscription toward the cost of completing a Buddhist monastery. The priests and everybody else were incredulous of his ability to pay so large a sum, as he was known to have no money. When asked for his subscription the young painter asked for a wall to be prepared for him. He was allotted a wall of a small chapel close to the temple. Shutting himself up, he worked in secret. After a month had passed he sent for the priests and showed them a full-length figure of the hermit saint Vimalakīrti which he had painted on the wall. When at last the public were admitted, they were speechless with admiration of the radiant vision; and in a few minutes the whole sum was collected and Ku K'ai-chih's boast vindicated. This story shows that the practice of painting frescoes on a large scale was already customary among the Buddhists. And in fact there are frescoes not much later than this in date still existing at Tun-huang" (*Eumorfopoulos Collection—Chinese Frescoes; Binyon, London, 1927*). The speechless admiration of the public when they saw the wall-picture of the Buddhist saint must have been akin to that of the local people of the Hsing Hua Monastery district, whence the Buddhist fresco of this study was derived, for the popular name it is still known by is the "Monastery of the Divine Painting" (*chap.* VI).

Ku K'ai-chih left three essays on painting, which are preserved in the "Famous Pictures of Successive Dynasties" by Chang Yen-yüan, and one of these is an elaborate description of a Taoist picture, called "Painting the Cloud-terrace Mountain." This is taken to be the artist's outline of instructions for the painting of a large wall-decoration for some temple, which may or may not have been carried out.

An artist in the middle of the sixth century, Yao Tsui, writing on classification of paintings, speaks of what must have been frescoes. He says, "on the high towers of the Nine Storeys, immortals and divine beings are depicted for the beholders; on the walls of the Four Gates, sages and virtuous men are represented in great compositions. In the Cloud Pavilion there are paintings which inspire reverence; in the side apartments of the Palace, there are the pictures of the departure of the envoys to a distant land." (*See, Wang Shih Hua Yüan, sec. 1, bk. 1*; *trans. by Dr. Shio Sakanishi, The Spirit of the Brush: Murray, 1939.*)

In the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907) fresco painting reached its highest mark in China, and its great Master was Wu Tao-tzu, considered by the Chinese as the greatest painter China ever knew. This subject has such a close bearing on the three frescoes of this study as to require a section of its own, and will be dealt with below (*chap.* VIII).

The Sung Periods, including the Five Dynasties (A.D. 907-960), the Tartar Dynasties (A.D. 907-1234), and the Yüan or Mongol Dynasty (A.D. 1280-1368) covered a period of 461 years, during which time frescoes were very extensively painted in temples and palaces. A high standard of excellence was on the whole maintained, and the influence of Wu Tao-tzu's style is particularly recognized, both in Sung paintings and in Sung literature dealing with painting. The three frescoes described and illustrated in this study fall into this period, as do also the wooden Buddhistic figures which come from the same locality as the frescoes.

In the Ming Period (A.D. 1368-1644) temple frescoes continued to be drawn, but they do not maintain the high character of the earlier paintings. Some fragments of frescoes from Peking, of the period of Yung-Lo (A.D. 1403-1425), now in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, show a certain refinement, but most of the Ming wall-paintings are inferior to those of the earlier periods. In the Ming Dynasty itself the earlier works would seem to be superior to those of the latter part of the dynasty, as might be expected in view of the steady deterioration of fresco painting; and the better paintings of the whole period appear to be those from localities in or near the nation's capital of Peking. On the whole it would seem to be unwise to generalize until more data are available for purposes of comparison, and more authentic information obtained regarding dates and provenance.

In a review of articles which dealt with frescoes exhibited in the National University of Peking, and which came from the Hsing Hua Monastery of Chi-shan Hsien, Shansi, Dr. J. C. Ferguson has these remarks to make on Chinese frescoes in general:

> The first fresco painting of which I have found record is that of Ku K'ai-chih, fifth century, in the Wa Kuan Ssu at Nanking. Many fantastic tales are told of the striking and illusive character of these paintings of Ku. In the T'ang Dynasty many of the temples of Western Ssuch'uan were decorated with frescoes. Li Chih-ch'un of the Sung Dynasty, who was an intimate friend of the great poet Su Tung-p'o, has left a record of the frescoes in the

> Shêng Tz'u Ssu in Ch'êng-tu. He states that the walls of ninety-six rooms, large and small, were decorated with frescoes. The "Strange Records" (*Tu i chih*) by Li Jung, records that, during the K'ai Yüan period (713-741) of the Emperor Hsüan Tsung of the T'ang Dynasty, Wu Tao-tzu painted several frescoes of supernatural creatures in the T'ien Kuan Ssu. In the "Old Records of Hangchow" (*Wu-lin chiu shih*) it is stated that in the Wu Shêng Miao at the West Lake there were frescoes painted by Su Han-ch'ên, and in the Hsien Ying Kuan, a Taoist temple, there were landscape paintings by Hsiao Chao, but that none of these paintings was preserved.
>
> As far as I know there are no records of any distinguished painter of the Ming or Ch'ing Dynasties who decorated walls with frescoes. At the present time such work is done solely by artisans. It is agreed by all writers that the object of these frescoes of religious subjects was either to accumulate merit or to be votive offerings in prayer for some particular object. They were on the same plane as other contributions made to temples for pious purposes [*The China Journal*, *April 1927*, *p. 178*].

In addition to these two objects a third must surely be that of providing a religious background or environment for the carved figures which stood before the paintings, which, after all, were the objects of worship in the temples.

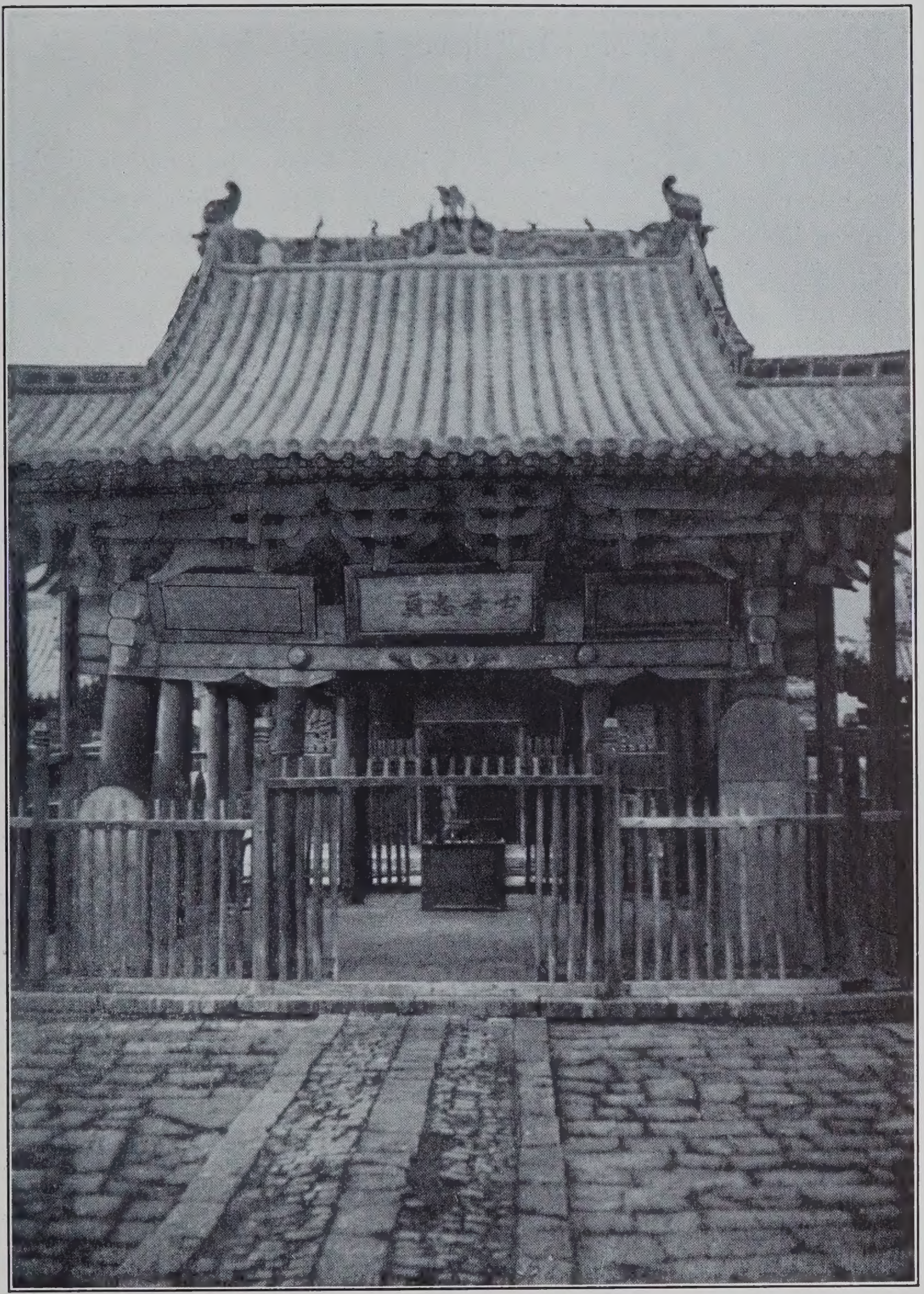


FIGURE 1

Temple Entrance at Chieh-hsiu, Shansi.

II

EXISTING CHINESE FRESCOES

CHINESE wall-paintings still in existence are now becoming known in increasing numbers, due mainly to archaeological explorations since the turn of the century, but also to the fact that the disturbances in China of late have threatened the existence of Chinese temples and monasteries, and pressure of economical conditions have forced the custodians of the temples to part with anything which had a negotiable value.

Amongst the earliest pictures which may be characterized as frescoes must be placed the tomb-tile pictures of the Han period (206 B.C. - A.D. 221). These large pottery tiles formed the walls of tomb chambers in Western Honan, and were not only stamped with hunting scenes and other designs, but were sometimes painted in polychrome (*Tomb Tile Pictures of Ancient China, Museum Studies—Number One, Toronto, 1939*). Of the latter there are specimens in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, in the Toronto collection, and in other collections.

An interesting group of frescoes of the early fifth century was found in the Chi-an district of T'ung-hua Province, Manchoukuo. They were discovered in 1935, by Japanese archaeologists, in two mound-built tombs, which it is stated must have been built shortly after the year A.D. 427 (*T'ung Kou, vol.* II; *H. Ikeuchi, S. Umehara and J. Harada, Tokyo, 1940*). Similar tomb-paintings of the Chinese tradition were brought to light by Japanese archaeologists in 1905, in Korean territory, near the mouth of the Ta-tung River which are dated mostly in the sixth century (*Introduction to Chinese Painting; A. Waley, London, 1923, pp. 83-84*).

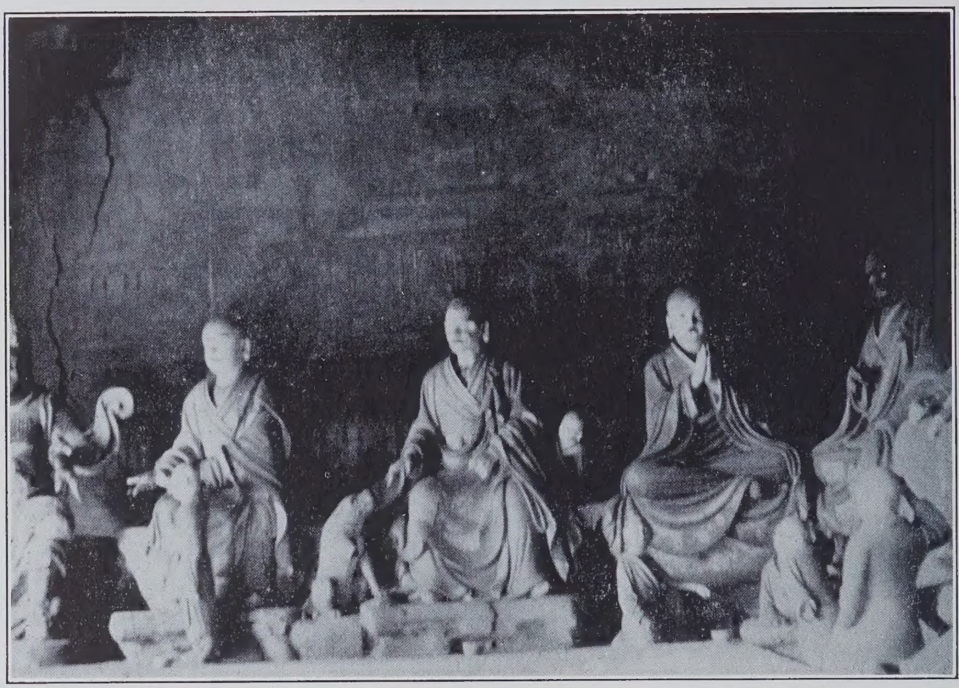
The frescoes in the grottoes of Tun-huang, discovered and described by Sir Aurel Stein, and from other places of the Chinese Turkestan area traversed by the ancient caravan routes, are naturally of very great importance. They belong mostly to the T'ang period (A.D. 618-907), and are supplemented by a great number of banner and scroll paintings obtained from the same caves, and dealing with the same themes. Many of these are of the Buddhist Mandala or Paradise type, which is that of the Buddhist fresco in Toronto. At least two others have affinities with the Toronto Taoist frescoes, for they deal with stellar deities, and in particular with the Five Planets. One of these is the tempera wall-painting in Cave VIII of the Ch'ien-fo-tung (*Serindia; Stein, Oxford, 1921, chap.* XXII); and the other a dated banner (A.D. 897) depicting Buddha on a chariot escorted by the Five Planetary deities (*Fig. 25*). These latter are similar in their form and their symbolism to the Five Planetary deities pictured among the Celestial Stems of the Taoist fresco on "The Lord of the Northern Dipper" (*chap.* XIII). The well-known discoveries of Professor P. Pelliot in the same place are also of very great importance (*Les Grottes de Touen-Houang, Paris, 1914-1924*). A recent description of a Tun-huang fresco group is that of Mr. Langdon Warner in his study of a ninth-century grotto at Wan Fo Hsia (*Buddhist Wall-Paintings; Langdon Warner, Cambridge, Mass., 1938*). It must be acknowledged that the discoveries at Tun-huang form the most outstanding contribution to our knowledge of early Chinese frescoes, coming as they do from a definite locality, and with authentic data for approximate, and in some cases accurate, dating.

The famous Horyuji Kondo frescoes at Nara belong to this same T'ang period, and though they were made in Japan, they are entirely in the Chinese tradition of Wu Tao-tzu, and may actually have been painted by a Chinese artist (*Ten Great Temples of Nara, Part* II. *The Horyuji Temple; Tokyo, 1934*).

The explorations of A. von Le Coq in Chinese Turkestan from 1904 to 1914 (*Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan; Le Coq, London, 1928*); and of Albert Grünwedel in the same area during 1906-7 (*Altbuddhistische Kultstatten in Chinesisch-Turkistan; A. Grünwedel, Berlin, 1912*), brought forth frescoes of an important nature, among them being wall-paintings which showed Manichaean and Christian influences.

In the autumn of 1934, Mr. Laurence Sickman, Curator of Oriental Art in the Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, visited areas in south Shansi, with the object of studying the

A



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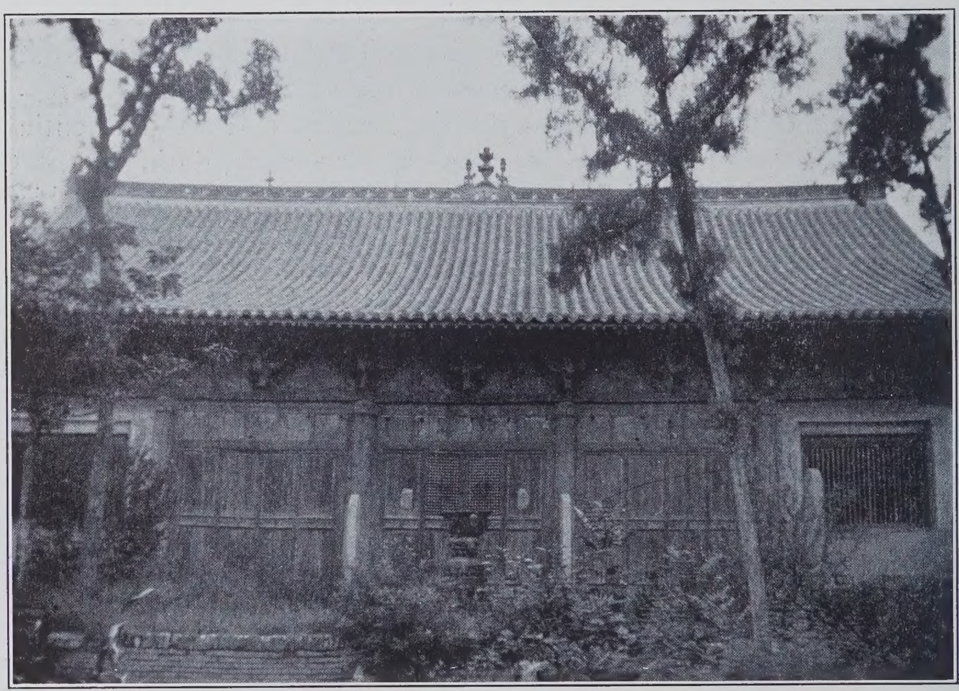


FIGURE 2

A. Lohans in the Hsing Hua Monastery.

B. North Hall of the Hsing Hua Monastery.

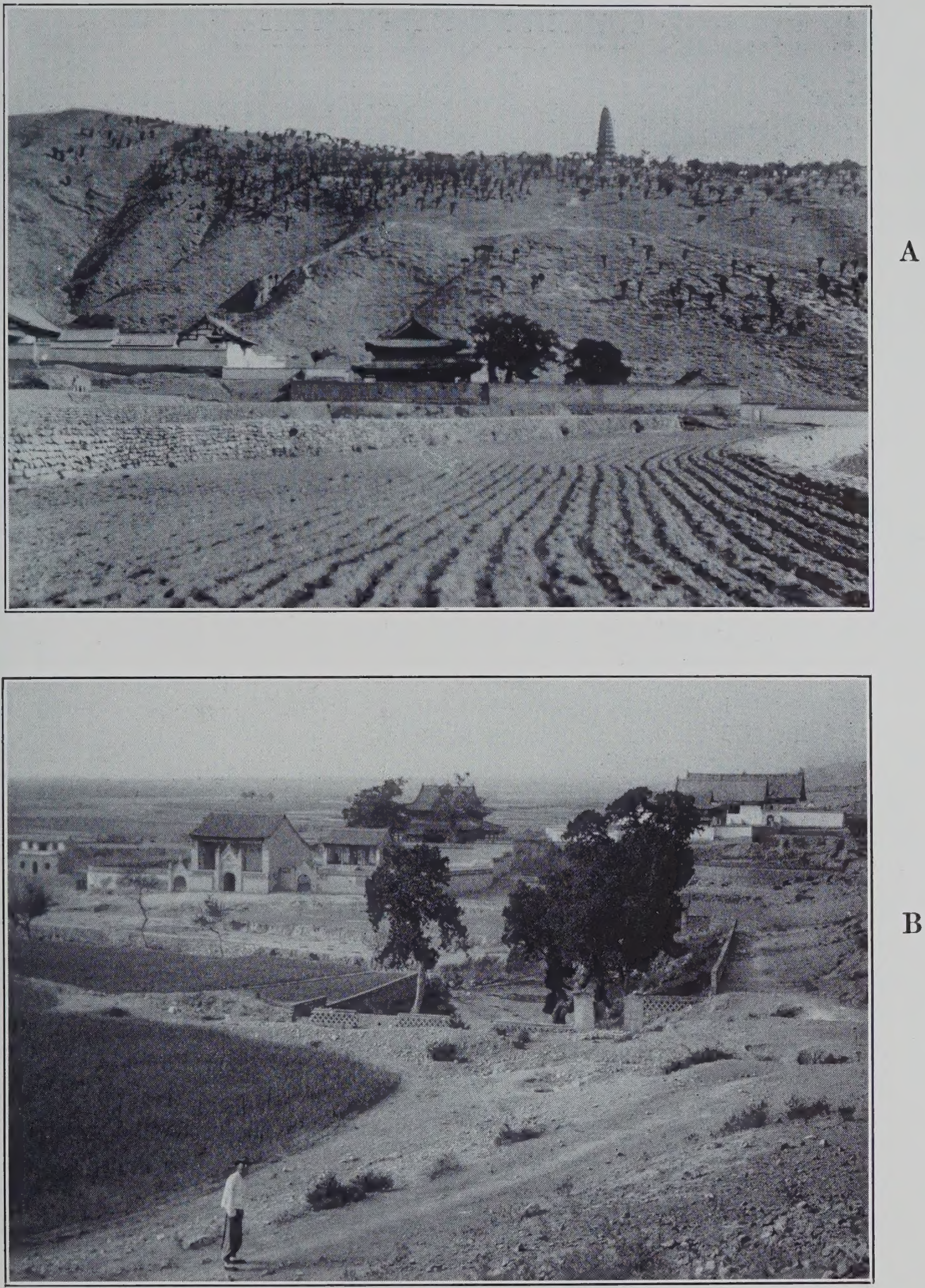


FIGURE 3

A. Kuang Shêng: Lower Monastery and Pagoda.

B. Kuang Shêng: Lower Monastery Group.

remains of Buddhist art in wall-paintings and sculpture. His description and findings concerning one temple, the Ming Ying Wang Tien of the Kuang Shêng Ssu, in Chao-ch'êng County are given in the *Revue des Arts Asiatiques*, Paris, June 1937, under the title "Wall-paintings of the Yüan Period in Kuang Shêng Ssu, Shansi." He found non-Buddhist wall-paintings on each of the four walls of this hall, which were of the highest order. They were of particular interest because they had not been conceived as backgrounds for sculpture, such as the Buddhist paradise scenes, but were intended to be viewed independently as narrative paintings. Associated with the paintings were four dates which were of special significance, as they definitely dated the paintings as being of early fourteenth-century period, beyond any shadow of doubt. These dates are September 6, 1305, when an earthquake occurred which necessitated repairs and renovations, and 1319 when the repairs were executed and an inscribed stone monument set up to record the facts, which stone is still in the hall. In addition there were three dates, 1316, and two of 1324, incised and written on the walls which carried the frescoes, and having associations with the frescoes (*Fig. 3*).

In his very illuminating description Mr. Sickman says,

> I doubt that a pounce from a full-sized cartoon was used. Probably rather, the design was first sketched on in charcoal and then gone over with a brush charged with thick black ink. Doubtless such lining was done by the master-craftsman or most skilled hand in the studio. It now remained for the apprentices to fill in the defined fields with colour. The pigments used were powdered colours mixed with glue and water. These were applied directly to the dry wall. A careful examination of the wall surface did not reveal any evidence of repainting or any subsequent restoration.
>
> Both the conception and the brush-work are of a high order. There is a remarkable attention to detail, yet there is never an over-elaboration at the expense of broad and large effects suitable to paintings of such size. In the figure of a warrior, for example, the shark-skin mountings of his scabbard and details of ornament are rendered with precision, but the lines of his clothes and his leather boots are defined with the utmost simplicity.

A group of very beautiful frescoes was recently brought to knowledge by Mrs. Angela Latham, which she found in a small temple ten miles north-west of Peking (*Illustrated London News*, *February 27, 1937*). This is known as the Fa Hai Ssu, literally the "Sea of the Law Monastery," and its setting is the beautiful range known as the Western Hills. The paintings are said to have been made in 1440, which would be in the reign of the Ming Emperor Chêng T'ung, who was famous as a patron of the arts and as a temple-builder. In the Kuang Hsü edition of the Gazetteer of Peking Prefecture (*Kuang Hsü Shun T'ien Fu Chih*) it is stated that this monastery was renovated in the reign of Ch'êng Hua (1465-1487), and that on its interior walls were frescoes which depicted mythical and legendary worthies. The frescoes as usual formed the background for the rows of figures in the round which were still in position, and the style of the drawings is what is generally accepted as of the school of Wu Tao-tzu. The ornaments on the fresco figures were raised in gesso and gilded, which is usually accepted as characteristic of the later frescoes, though this technique seems to have been common in the Yüan period, as is known from gesso ornamentation on Yüan wooden figures.

There must still be many such temples as the Fa Hai Ssu and the Ming Ying Wang Ssu, in the northern provinces of Hopei, Honan, Shansi, and Shensi, where frescoes may be found on the walls, and it is fervently hoped that peaceful conditions may soon ensue in those areas, so that vandalism may be brought to a halt, and adequate care and protection be given to them. When those conditions come, a wonderfully rich field of fresco material will be made available to students of Chinese art and culture.

Most museums and art collections today contain specimens of Chinese frescoes, and it would be impossible to draw up anything like a complete list of these, but a few of the more important may be noted since they have already been mentioned in publications.

The Eumorfopoulos collection of frescoes has been very fully described by Laurence Binyon (*Catalogue of the Eumorfopoulos Collection of Frescoes; L. Binyon, London, 1927*). Some of these frescoes come from the Moon Mountain Grotto (*Yüeh Shan Tung*) some five miles north of the county-town of Yüan-ch'ü in the south Shansi district, and almost within the fifty-mile radius of the P'ing-yang Fu circle (*Map, p. 5*). These frescoes have a raised gesso ornamentation, and the most reasonable attribution seems

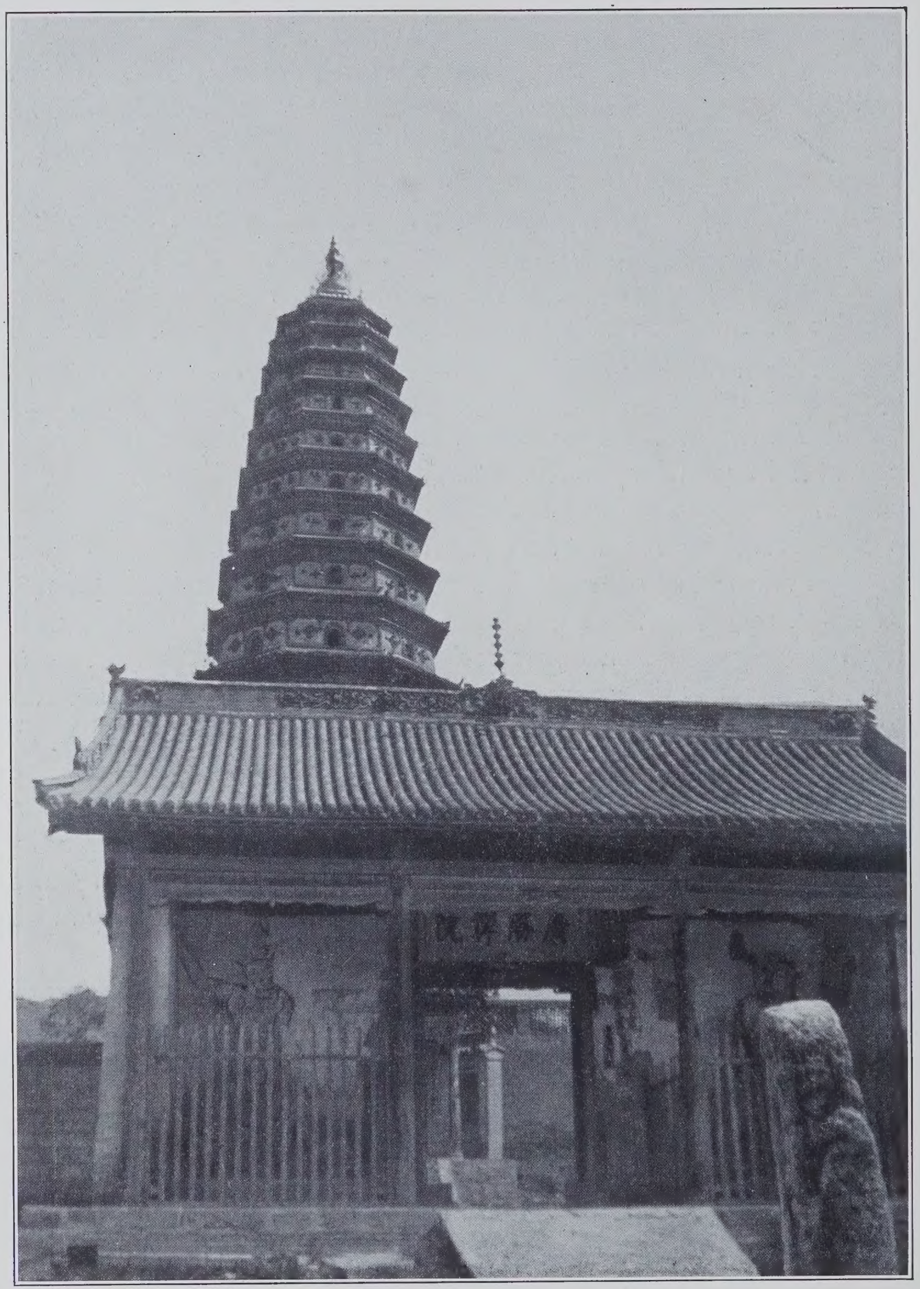


FIGURE 4

Kuang Shêng: the Pagoda and Entrance of Upper Monastery.
The Four Guardians occupy this Temple Gateway.

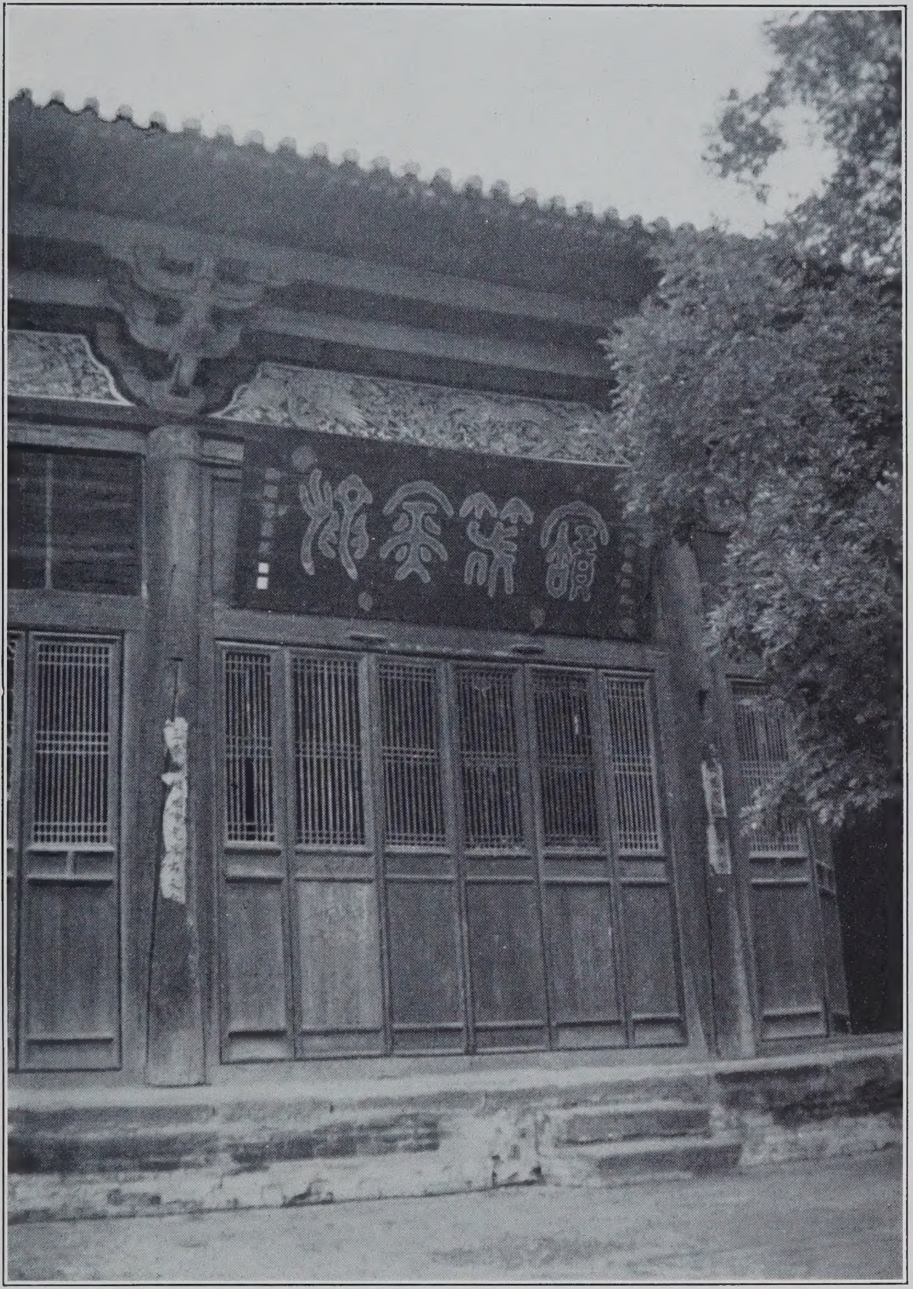


FIGURE 5

Kuang Shêng: Central Hall of Lower Monastery.
Contained the Library of Sutras.

to be that of the Yüan period. Other frescoes of this collection are said to have come from the Ch'ing Liang Temple near Hsing-t'ang Hsien, which is in Hopei Province, some forty miles from the eastern border of Shansi Province, and about the middle of the province. Hsing-t'ang would be about 120 miles due east of T'ai-yüan Fu, so it might well come within the influence of the Shansi fresco painters. From a stone tablet erected in the temple courtyard in 1485 it is learnt that the temple was founded in 1188, which would be under the rule of the Chins or Kitans, and after destruction by soldiers it was restored in 1424. The three Bodhisattvas of the fresco from this temple are very beautiful, and would appear to be earlier than those from Yüeh Shan Tung.

There are extensive fresco paintings in the Berlin National Ethnological Museum, obtained by Le Coq from Chinese Turkestan, as mentioned above, which are outstanding.

On the American continent are to be found some of the larger and more spectacular frescoes. In Kansas City, in the Nelson Gallery of Art, there is the great fresco of a Buddhist Paradise, forty-five feet long, from the Kuang Shêng Ssu of Chao-ch'êng Hsien, Shansi, which is within the P'ing-yang circle, and just a few miles distant from Hung-tung Hsien (*Notes on Later Chinese Buddhist Art; L. Sickman, in Parnassus, April 1939, p. 12*). This Kuang Shêng Monastery is described below in the report of the two Chinese students (*chap.* VI).

In the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania are two Buddhist Paradise frescoes, each approximately thirty feet in length, which are said to have come from the Moon Hill Monastery (*Yüeh Shan Ssu*) five miles north of Ch'ing-hua Chên in Western Honan, which would be close to the south Shansi border (*The Museum Journal; Chinese Frescoes, Helen Fernald, Philadelphia; September 1926, June 1928 and June 1929*). These two frescoes show very close affinities with both the Toronto fresco from the Hsing Hua Ssu, and the Kansas City fresco from the Kuang Shêng Ssu, so that there was a question of doubt as to whether they did not originally come from the south Shansi area, and may well have been brought to Ch'ing-hua Chên for trans-shipment on the Tao-Ch'ing Railway. This doubt has now been removed by the fact that the chief abbot of the Kuang Shêng Ssu has recognized, from photographs, the Philadelphia frescoes as originally belonging to his monastery, and has given assurance that they came from the Lower Monastery (*chap.* VI). This being so, it is safe to assume that the period of the Philadelphia frescoes would be that of the Toronto and Kansas City frescoes.

Chinese frescoes are to be found in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, in the Fogg Museum at Harvard, in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, in the Cleveland Museum, and in other collections. In the Toronto Museum, in addition to the three large frescoes of this study, there are several fragments of frescoes from the Yao Wang Temple, three miles south of P'ing-yang city; from the Chieh Tzu T'ui Temple, four miles south-west of Chieh-hsiu Hsien (*Fig. 1*); from the Lung Hsing Monastery, five miles south-west of Chi-shan city; and from other places in Shansi.

In Japan most of the collections contain Chinese frescoes, but in China itself no thought has been paid to them until recently, and as far as is known the only important fresco that has been acquired by a Chinese institution is that of the National University of Peking. This University in 1927 obtained a fresco which came from the Hsing Hua Monastery of Chi-shan in south Shansi, which was the monastery the Toronto Buddhist fresco came from. The Peking fresco is also a large one, but certain of the figures are missing, and have probably been disposed of in other directions as individual fresco paintings. The whereabouts of this fresco at the present time are unknown (*China Journal*, *April 1927*, *pp. 178-179*).

WEST GALLERY OF THE BAO HE DIAN, GU GONG, BEIJING

References to Chinese frescoes:

1. Altbuddhistische Kultstatten in Chinesisch-Turkistan; A. Grünwedel, Berlin, 1912.
2. Buddhist Monuments in China; Tokiwa and Sekino, Tokyo, 1925.
3. Buddhist Wall-Paintings; L. Warner, Cambridge, Mass., 1938.
4. Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan; A. von Le Coq, London, 1928.
5. Catalogue of the Eumorfopoulos Collection of Frescoes; L. Binyon, London, 1927.
6. Catalogue of Paintings recovered from Tun-huang; A. Waley, 1931.
7. Exhibition of Chinese Art; Yamanaka, New York, November, 1934.

8. Les Grottes de Touen-Houang; P. Pelliot, Paris, 1914-1924.
9. Illustrated London News; A. Latham, February 27, 1937.
10. Serindia; Sir A. Stein, Oxford, 1921.
11. The Thousand Buddhas; Sir A. Stein and L. Binyon, London, 1921.
12. T'ung Kou, Vol. II; Ikeuchi, Umehara and Harada, Tokyo, 1940.
13. The University of Pennsylvania Museum Journal; September 1926, June 1928, and June 1929.
14. Notes on Later Chinese Buddhist Art; L. Sickman, Parnassus, April 1939.
15. Wall-paintings of the Yüan period in Kuang Shêng Ssu, Shansi; L. Sickman, Revue des Arts Asiatiques, Paris, June 1937.
16. Chinese on the Art of Painting; O. Sirén, Peiping, 1936.
17. Chinese Painting; J. C. Ferguson, Chicago, 1927.
18. Chinese Pictorial Art; Giles, London, 1918.
19. Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting; A. Waley, London, 1923.
20. Ten Great Temples of Nara; Part II, Tokyo, 1934.
21. The Spirit of the Brush; S. Sakanishi, Murray, 1939.

III

TECHNIQUE

THE frescoes of Chinese temples are painted on the plastered walls and form an aesthetic and religious background for the carved or moulded figures of deities which are the objects of worship, and which are set out before the fresco background.

1. *Background and Pigments*

The walls of Chinese temples are filled in to enclose the rooms, after the timber framework is joined together and the roof put on, so that they do not function as load carriers at all, which incidentally is the principle used in modern steel-frame structures. This means that inferior material and workmanship may be used in the construction of the walls and partitions, and though the one side of the wall may be smooth, the other, usually the interior surface, may be very uneven. To overcome this disadvantage and provide a suitably smooth surface for painting, a thick layer of mud mortar, bound with chopped-up straw or rushes, is plastered over the wall, and on this is finally spread a thin layer of pure lime mortar, sometimes bound with bamboo pulp. It is on this smooth white surface that the frescoes are painted, sometimes in the true *fresco* method of applying the pigments to the wet lime plaster, but also in the *secco* method, in which the painting is done on the dry plaster. Although the Tun-huang method of painting is not that usually employed in Italian fresco-painting, it is that which is termed "Asiatic Fresco" by Sir Arthur Church. In his *Chemistry of Paints and Painting* (*1915, p. 307*), he describes this "peculiar variety of fresco painting" from specimens brought back from Chinese Turkestan by Sir Aurel Stein. The process he describes as follows:

> On a backing of the ordinary local loess mixed with the chopped stems and leaves of the common reed, there was spread a thin flat coating of impure burnt gypsum made into a cream with water. Pigments such as an iron red, malachite, a charcoal grey, and an ochre, sometimes mixed with the cream of burnt gypsum, were then painted on while the surface was still moist. On

> drying the colours became fixed, not by carbonation, as in true fresco work, but simply by the loss of the solvent water present and the crystallization of its content of gypsum [*Eumorfopoulos Collection of Chinese Frescoes; Binyon, 1927, p. 2*].

He goes on to say that from numerous analyses of painted plaster from various sites, he can speak with confidence of "the essential distinction between Asiatic and European fresco; the former is essentially a plaster-of-Paris method."

But as in Italy so in China a dry method also was used for mural painting, and as far as is known the frescoes from the south Shansi and west Honan area are mostly, if not all, paintings of the dry method.

The large fresco acquired by the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania from the Shansi-Honan region, is very similar to the Buddhist fresco of Toronto, and the following description by Miss Helen Fernald, in her article on the fresco, applies in every respect to the Toronto fresco (*The Museum Journal; September 1926, p. 242*):

> The technique is not that of true fresco. The walls were plastered with mud mixed with much chopped straw and over this a smoother but still rather gritty coat of reddish brown clay was spread. The painting was executed upon the dry wall with body colour, the thickness and opaqueness of which suggest tempera. The style is characterized by heavy outlining in black, the lines being sure, strong, unbroken, and of even width. Here they sweep in long rhythmic curves, there in snake-like coils. The flesh tones of the female deities are painted white in contrast to the creamy tan colour of the masculine figures. Another convention is the use of cloud scrolls to fill up the background. There is no trace of gold on the paintings or any use of moulded stucco such as one finds occasionally outlining jewels or other details in the frescoes of Tun-huang and those of later periods. It is the simplest, most straightforward kind of painting, depending purely upon its artistic qualities and deep sincerity for its appeal.
>
> The colour design is magnificent and deserves a few words to itself. Yet the colours used are few and not unusual. Red and green predominate but are of such degrees of saturation, used in such varying qualities and so skilfully arranged in spaces of different shapes and separated by tans or blues, that the result is one of subdued, if rich, harmony. There are two reds, the one a very dark one almost maroon such as the upper garments of the main figures are painted, the other likewise deep and rich but with a certain smouldering crimson in it. The green most used is an opaque emerald green

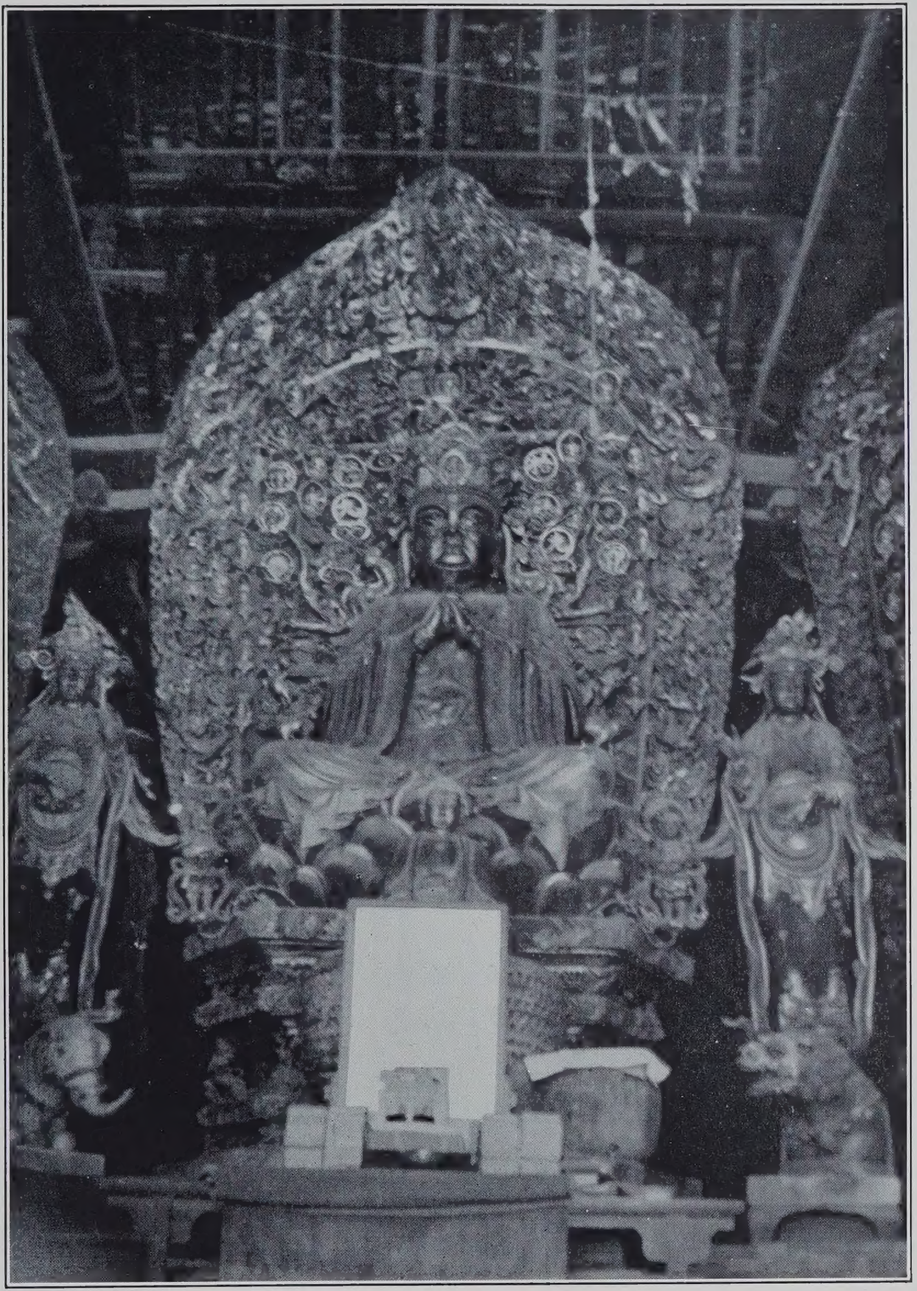


FIGURE 6

Kuang Shêng: Figures in Back Hall of Upper Monastery.
A Buddhist Trinity: Kuan-Yin attended by Wên-shu and P'u-hsien.

which, placed by itself, shines out brilliantly, but next to smaller quantities of a blue of equal saturation produces a delightful peacock effect. The green used about the faces of the Buddha and Bodhisattva is intense and weird but there is very little of it. There is also but a small quantity of an olive green which appears here and there in the draperies. Throne, head-dresses, jewels and brocaded borders are in emerald green combined with the corresponding blue. Flesh tones and much of the drapery are a creamy tan. The warm tone of the wall upon which the fresco was painted has done much to give these colours something in common, the tan of the background being a strong unifying factor. Indeed, the colours shine out from it like mediaeval jewels in a dull golden setting. Another unifying factor has been the use of the black outlines which separate the colours like the leads of a stained glass window and themselves tend always to flow toward the great central figure, rising to a climax in the deep blue blacks of his hair.

Mr. Langdon Warner supplies further data regarding pigments used at Tun-huang, from findings obtained by Mr. R. J. Gettens of the Fogg Museum (*Buddhist Wall-Paintings; Warner, Cambridge, Mass., 1938, p. 9*). He points out that there were six simple colours used in their natural state combined with water and glue, namely: Carbon Black from soot, White Kaolin from clay, Red Ochre, Green Malachite, Blue Azurite, and Vermilion from cinnabar. In addition there were two pigments which required complex manufacturing processes, Red Lead and Lead White; and three organic dyes, a Red Organic, a Yellow Organic, and a Blue Organic Dye, the latter being indigo.

2. *Geometrical Compositions*

Mr. Warner also points out the significant fact that Chinese wall-painters based their formal compositions on geometry.

> The master laid it out with try-squares and plumb-lines and long strings wet with India ink, to be snapped on the white walls as carpenters and masons snap their chalk-lines today in the west. With pin and string the great round haloes were established. A head here and a shoulder there was fixed, and placid hands, where they formed the immemorial hieratic gestures, were drawn. On this pattern, of set points and angles and proportions, other draughtsmen took up the delineation of drapery and laid out the adamantine structure of the throne.
>
> Then, and not till then, skilled hands spread on the pigments in their traditional places, from jugs of colour already mixed and tested. So, and not otherwise, within the limits of the first great geometric pattern, the job was completed by inevitable and foreseen stages.

On dozens of walls and at both groups of caves I have discovered the pin point of the compasses that marked out the haloes and have traced the horizontal and vertical and diagonal lines extended through the most involved compositions to cross, precise, where an accent falls. I believe the master stood before that blank white rectangle of wall determining his centre by taut strings that crossed from opposite corners. Then, backing off to view the space at his command, he realized how the god's great head must rise above the centre plexus. With a few light strokes of brush or charcoal he built his equilateral triangles on the median line; the triangle that bounds the haloes of the side figures and the lesser one within for the body of the god.

Areas were delineated with black or light red lines, and in the flat areas enclosed by these lines the application of the prescribed colours was made, probably by the assistants of the artist, for the great areas to be covered would entail an enormous amount of labour.

3. *Removal and Packing*

The process of removing the fresco from the wall requires a deft and skilful hand, and the physical exertion connected with the work is by no means light.

The plaster with its clay backing is dry and friable, and because of the weight of the slabs they are apt to break up and crumble. Moreover, care must be taken to avoid cutting across faces and other important parts of the picture, so the slabs cannot be cut to a uniform size. The outlines for the cuts are first decided upon, and then with a chopper, or with a saw where it can be used, the plaster is cut through to the brick wall. Sometimes it is necessary for men to hold supporting boards, covered with felt, pressed firmly against the painting to be removed. When the section is sawn around, it is carefully pried from the wall, and, supported by the boards, the upper edge is first moved out and down, until at last it lies quite horizontal on the boards.

In packing, boards must be prepared large enough to take the section and leave a margin round every side of from three to four inches. Two layers of dry springy reeds are laid at right-angles to each other on the board. These are covered with thin felt and then surfaced with cotton wool, and on this the picture is placed, painted side downwards. This is covered with layers of cotton

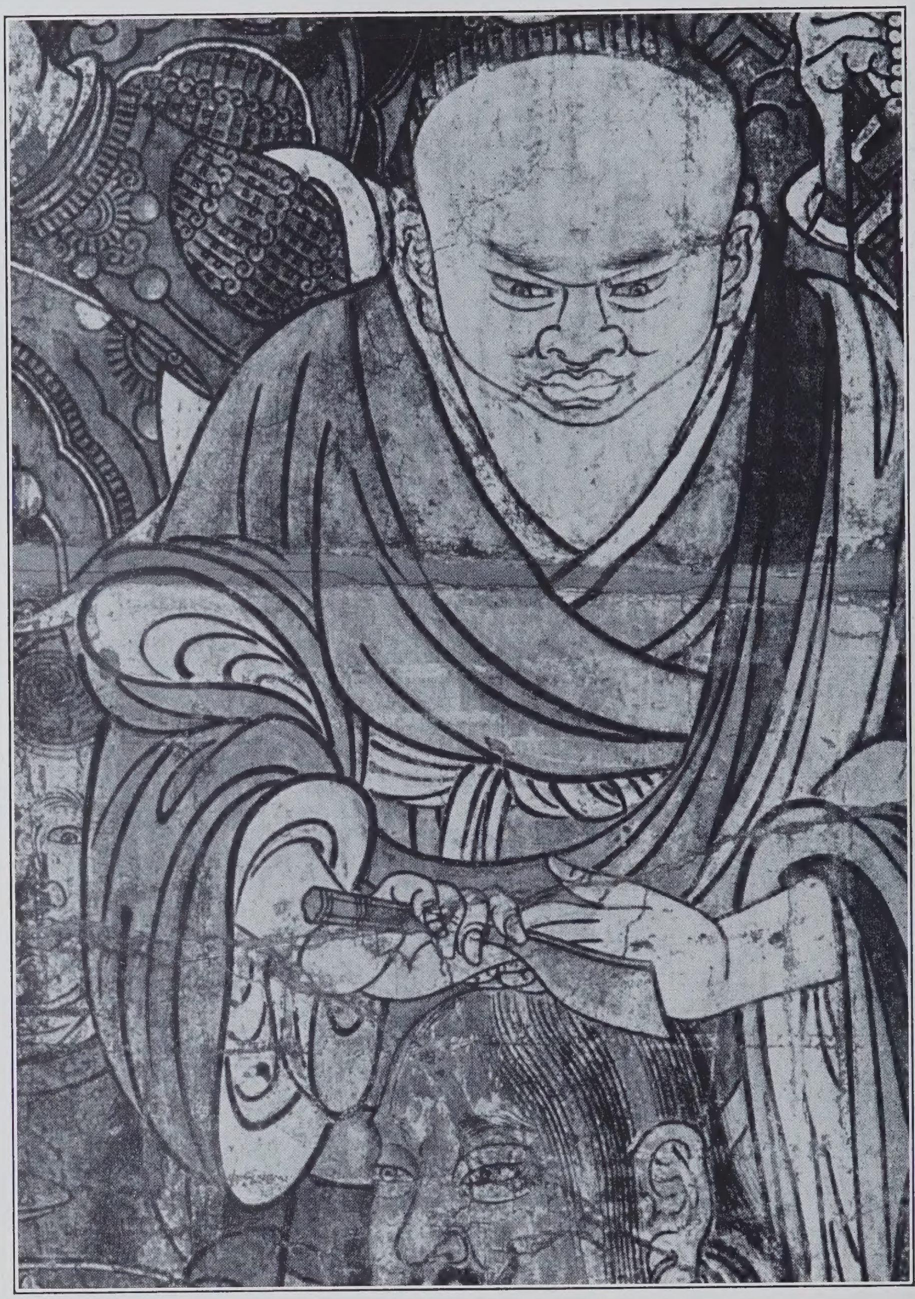


FIGURE 7A

Detail of Buddhist Fresco: Obverse. (See chap. XII: 12.)

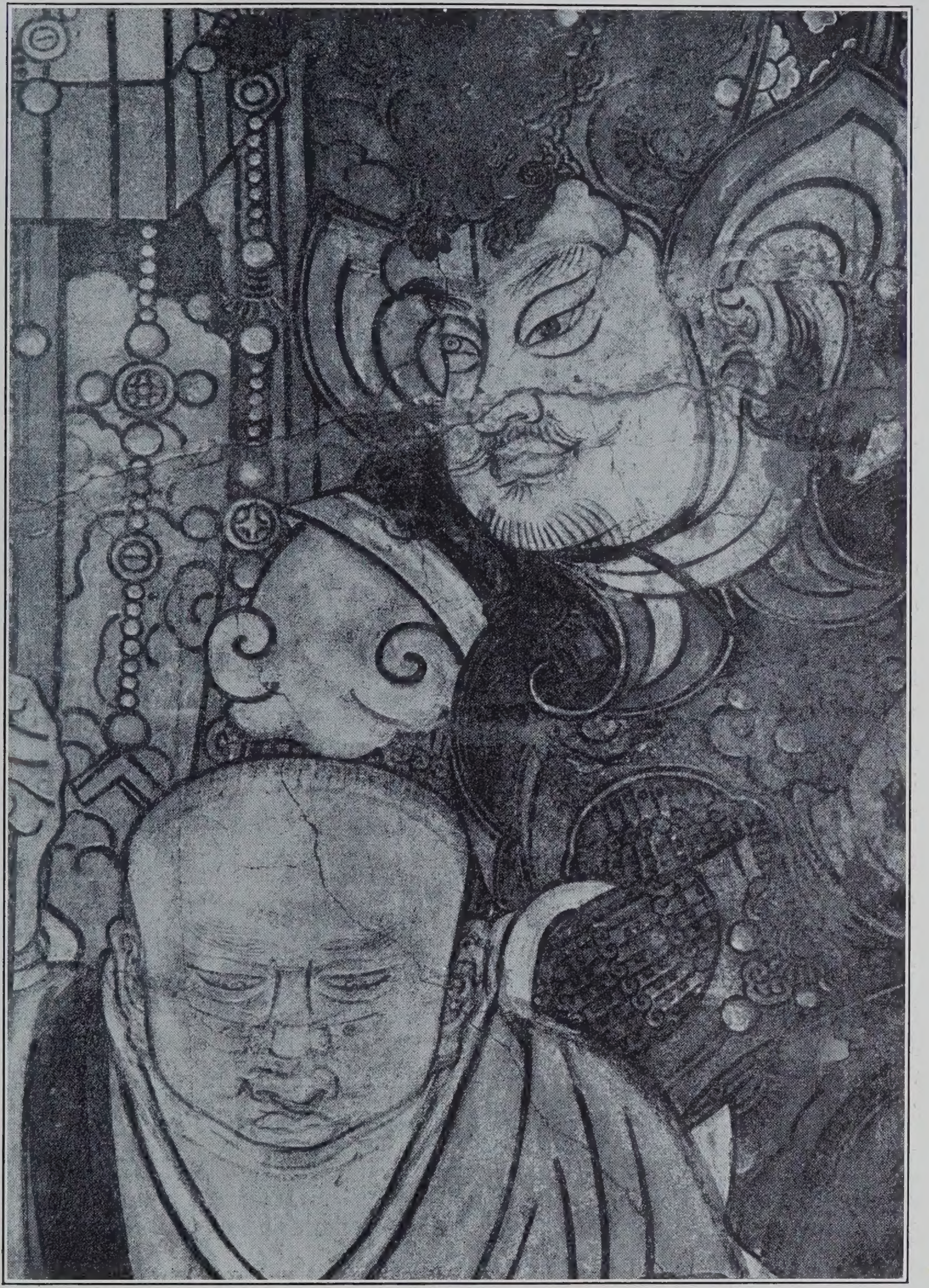


FIGURE 7B

Detail of Buddhist Fresco: Reverse. (See chap. XII: 12.)

wool and then comes a second picture, with painted side uppermost, and on this comes packing material similar to that of the other section. On this is placed the other board covering, the four edges are packed tight with flax or reed filling, and the whole is roped tight and packed in a wooden case, with ample space around the inner package which is tightly wadded with flax straw.

4. *Laboratory Treatment and Installation*

The Buddhist fresco of the Royal Ontario Museum was packed as above and brought to Toronto, where in time it was dealt with in the laboratory of that institution. The method employed was to soak the pigmented surface with a solution of vinyl-acetate, which would thus hold the particles of plaster together, and then carefully to pare off the thick backing of clay from the under surface. This was done so thoroughly that the pigmented design was reached from this under surface. A photograph of the barber monk from this reverse side (*Fig. 7B*) compared with a photograph taken from the obverse (*Fig. 7A*) incidentally revealed a re-painting of certain parts. In the barber's face, for instance, the first painting must have shown the barber looking not at the Emperor's head but straight forward, and since he held a razor in his hand the critic probably felt this was a dangerous thing to do, and so the eyes were re-painted looking downward on the work in hand.

After the background of clay was removed the pigment was thoroughly saturated with several applications of vinyl-acetate, gauze or thin canvas was applied to the under side, and this was then attached, under pressure, to a tough millboard, each section of the picture being matched to its place in the whole composition. These sections of millboard were then screwed to a wooden framework already attached to the wall of the gallery. This work on the Buddhist fresco was done in 1933, and after tempering for two years or more the face of the painting was cleaned, which revealed the colours as having retained their freshness in a remarkable manner, considering the centuries of exposure in the temple.

IV

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

IF it be assumed that the three frescoes come somewhere in the first part of the thirteenth century, and there seems to be much evidence to support this attribution, then an outline of the historical background of the period and the district concerned, might not be without interest and value.

The dominant historical personage of this period, of course, is Ghengis Khan (A.D. 1162-1227), the founder of the Mongol Empire; and following him was Ogotai Khan (A.D. 1185-1241), his third son and successor. Contemporaneous with these two Mongol chiefs were the rulers of the Chin or Golden Tartars Dynasty, from Shih Tsung (Ta Ting; A.D. 1161-1189) down to the end of the Chin Dynasty in 1234. During this time the Chins ruled over this part of China covering Tartary, the provinces of Pehchihli, Shansi, Shantung, Honan, Southern Shensi, and that part of Chiang-nan north of the Yellow River. Their main capital was at Yen-ching, near the modern Peking, until 1213, when the court moved to Pien-ching, the present K'aifeng, in Honan, where it remained until the dynasty was terminated at the fall of Pien-ching in 1234.

Farther south, and somewhat out of the area of conflict at this time, was the Southern Sung Dynasty (A.D. 1127-1280), with its capital at Lin-an, the present Hangchou, which was known to Marco Polo as Kinsay. It was the culture of the Sung Dynasty that permeated China proper at this time, for the Northern Sung (A.D. 960-1127), with its capital at Pien-ching (K'aifeng), had developed a culture rich in scholarship, and disseminated it, through talented statesmen, to all parts of the empire. Then, through weakness and venality of the court, the country became overrun by Tartar tribes from the north, so that the capital had to be moved south to Lin-an (Hangchou) where it was the centre of a very limited area, under the rule of what is known as the Southern Sung Dynasty (A.D. 1127-1280). The north China area was in turn occupied by the Chin (Golden) Nü-chên Tartars (A.D. 1115-1234), and then by the Mongols, until in 1280 the Southern Sung also was eliminated, and the Mongol or Yüan Dynasty (A.D. 1280-1368) controlled the whole empire. Yet Chinese culture was retained by the Mongols and continued to dominate the life of the people, until finally it swallowed up the conquerors, and Chinese rule once more came into its own.

The earlier years of Ghengis Khan, then known by the name of Temudjin, were full of vicissitudes and perils, for his father died when he was thirteen years old and there were many treacherous rivals for his father's chieftainship. But his mother, who acted as regent, was a woman gifted with courage and foresight, and by her wisdom and statecraft, and Temudjin's own ruthless bravery and powerful personality, his position as chief of the clan became assured. It was in 1203, when Temudjin was forty-one years old, that he was elected a chief Khan; and the name of Ghengis Khan, or the "Very Mighty" Khan, was conferred on him by a gathering of the chiefs of the tribes in 1206.

The history of Ghengis and his son Ogotai concerns us only in as far as it touches the Chins, who ruled over Southern Shansi, the locality of the frescoes. It was during the reign of the Chin Emperor Chang Tsung (A.D. 1190-1208), in the year 1195, that the two wooden Bodhisattvas from Hung-tung were made (*Figs. 8 and 9, chap.* VII), and it was in this Emperor's reign that his uncle Ta An, who held the fief of Wei in Honan, had used his influence to thwart the rise of Temudjin. In 1209 this same Ta An succeeded his nephew as ruler of the Chin Dynasty, as Wei-shao Wang, retaining his own personal name of Ta An, but his reign was short-lived as he died in 1212. In the first year of his reign, Ta An sent the usual embassy to Ghengis Khan to receive his tribute, but the Khan refused to recognize such an obligation to the Chin monarch. Ghengis determined on a military campaign against the Chins, and having made his preparations, in March 1211 he set forth accompanied by his four sons and a strong army. The Mongol army was highly successful, but the list of military marches and battles is monotonous and gruesome reading. The Chin court, under Emperor Hsüan Tsung (A.D. 1213-1223), was moved to Pien-ching (K'aifeng) late in 1213, and Ghengis set out to assail the capital and to break the power of the Chins in Honan. During these few years the southern part of Shansi, that is the region of our frescoes, and the adjoining parts of Honan, were overrun by the armies of Ghengis. The important barrier of Tung Kuan, at the south-west bend of the Yellow River, and just across the river from P'u-chou Fu, was captured in 1214, as well as several cities along the great highway parallel with the southern bank of the river, until the capital itself was laid siege to, but not having a sufficient force the leader of the Mongols was compelled to retire, and soon after he was defeated at P'ing-yang Fu in Shansi.

From this point the more important activities of the Mongols, under the personal leadership of Ghengis and three of his sons, were directed towards the West, where they overran all the countries straight across the Asia continent, and into Europe as far as the Danube and Dnieper regions. Scores of countries were laid waste, with a rapidity and ghastly ruthlessness such as history has never seen, and which did not abate even when Ghengis returned to Mongolia in 1224.

Meanwhile, one of Ghengis' generals, Mukuli, in 1218 had set out to finish the conquest of the Chins, and by 1219 he had completely occupied the province of Shansi. It was while he was making plans to invade Honan and overthrow the Chin court at Pien-ching, that he died in 1222, and shortly afterwards the Chin Emperor Hsüan Tsung (Utubu; A.D. 1213-1223) also died.

Ghengis Khan died in 1227, but it was not until 1229 that a general gathering of the chiefs elected his successor, and his third son, Ogotai, then thirty-nine years old, was their choice as chief Khan.

Although schooled in the heartless warfare methods of his father, Ogotai was a benevolent and generous prince, and became drawn towards cultural activities in a measure, through Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, an able and learned Kitan who had been drafted into the service of Ghengis, and who, under Ogotai, became Imperial Chancellor. Ogotai now proceeded to carry out his plans for the conquest of Chin, and to that end completed the capture of Shansi and Shensi, and pressed forward into Honan. After several years of conflict during the reign of Ai Tsung (Ninkiassu; A.D. 1224-1233), the Chin Dynasty fell in May 1234, and Ogotai Khan became the sole ruler of this part of China. The Emperor of the Southern Sung, Li Tsung (A.D. 1225-1264), continued to rule the southeastern part of China from his capital at Lin-an in Chehkiang Province, for Ogotai had been on terms of peace with the Sung court. The administration of affairs had fallen into great confusion during the Mongol conquest, but from Ogotai's court his wise Chancellor, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, was allowed to bring in extensive reforms and to organize the great Mongol Empire, as touching the Asia continent, in ways of peace and order.

This man, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (A.D. 1190-1244), was the most powerful official in the service of Ogotai, and his influence for good cannot be over-estimated. He was a descendant of a prince of the House of Liao, the Ch'i Tan (Kitan) Tartars who ruled in the northern borders of China. His father, who held office under the Chin Tartars, died when he was three years old, and being brought up by his mother, he read widely in all branches of literature, especially in astronomy and mathematics. In 1214 he was Governor of Peking under the Chins, and when that city was taken by the forces of Ghengis Khan he was summoned into the presence of the conqueror. He was said to be eight feet in height, with a splendid beard and a voice like thunder. "You are a Kitan," said Ghengis; "I sent my generals to take vengeance upon your enemies, the Chins." "My father and I," replied he, "have both served the Chins; how can they be my enemies?" He was thereupon attached to the staff of Ghengis, who conferred upon him the name "Long-beard." In 1219 he accompanied his master into Western Asia on his successful campaign against Persia. In 1220 he reformed the calendar, and in 1224 he set out with Ghengis to conquer India. At a pass on the Karatag Mountains they fell in with a strange green animal like a deer, with a single horn and a horse's tail, and taking this as a divine warning to retire, Ghengis retired forthwith. After the death of Ghengis he continued in the service of Ogotai, and became his trusted counsellor, venturing even to remonstrate with him upon his indulgence in drink. He encouraged literature, and caused the representative of Confucius in the fifty-first generation to be sought out and ennobled (*Chinese Biographical Dictionary; H. A. Giles*).

He introduced regular government administration and taxation, a uniform system of weights and measures, court ceremonial, and criminal jurisprudence, and in 1236 he instituted paper-money for currency. Amongst other stabilizing influences the Chancellor fostered general education. In 1236 he renewed the old examinations in the larger towns, making proficiency in them the test of capacity for public appointments, and even Sung slaves were allowed to compete in these examinations. One day he addressed Ogotai thus: "When one sets up a porcelain factory, one collects apt workmen for the conduct of affairs; we must do the same, and only lettered people are fit for this work. If we do not begin to employ such, the race will become extinct." The Emperor consented, and thus, says Rémusat, the vanquished had the doors of preferment open to them, and, as they were very superior in culture to their conquerors, the first step was taken in the long struggle by which the Chinese regained the control of the empire and eventually ousted their conquerors. The first appointments made in virtue of this civil service examination scheme were those of magistrates and departmental judges. In 1237, a year before the date of the Hsing Hua Monastery fresco, Yeh-lü founded two colleges, one at Yang-ching and the other at P'ing-yang Fu, the centre of the Southern Shansi fresco district, where the Mongol youth were taught history, geography, arithmetic, and astronomy. This fact gives direct evidence that the frescoes were produced in what must have been a strong cultural centre of the Mongol state, for the date on the Hsing Hua Monastery wall was "the *wu-hsü* year of the Great Yüan State," and this could only be the year 1238.

After the death of Ogotai in 1241, Yeh-lü did not hesitate to censure the Empress to her face for her abuse of power, for she had seized the regency first for her step-grandson, and then after 1246 for her own son Kuyak. Yeh-lü was subjected to so much suspicion and annoyance that he died broken-hearted in 1247. His detractors searched among his possessions expecting to find a large amount of wealth such as they would have piled up if they had had his opportunities. But the would-be looters were disappointed for the only objects his house contained were a lute and some books.

Of this great and good statesman Rémusat says: "A Tartar by origin, a Chinaman by cultivation, he stood between the oppressed and the oppressors . . . his life was dedicated to pleading the cause of justice, of order, of civilization and humanity before triumphant barbarism. Nor can we calculate the millions of lives which he succeeded in saving."

As to Ogotai Khan, according to Howorth (*History of the Mongols, H. H. Howorth, vol.* 1; *London, 1876*): "Whether we rank Ogotai as a most fortunate conqueror, as a mighty potentate ruling an empire to which that of Napoleon or Alexander was very small, or as an administrator who managed to frame rules by which the vast mass was rivetted together for a long period, we must concede to him the character of one of the greatest monarchs the world has seen. Nor does it detract from his position that most of the work was done for him by other hands, for it is in the choice of fit servants that the masters of large empires oftenest fail."

V

LOCATION AND DATE

THE three frescoes were obtained from Southern Shansi within the fifty-mile radius centring in P'ing-yang Fu (*Map, p. 5*). The province of Shansi lies in the angle or bend of the Yellow River where it turns to flow eastward to the sea. Being within the Yellow River valley area its civilization has been continuous from the birth of China's history, and all the cultural movements of China have had close associations with the province.

Shansi as a whole is a country of mountain ranges and numerous valleys, and in the quiet valleys and under the peaks of the hills remote from the main routes of travel, are to be found numbers of restful monasteries and solitary temples. The ebb and flow of the warfare of these troubled times, which have so destructively swept the North China plain, and particularly the old historic region of the Yellow River valley, have left untouched most of these quiet sanctuaries, which have been affected only by the economic necessities of the present hard times, and by the tempting offers of Chinese antique dealers. In the Gazetteer of Shansi (*Shan-hsi t'ung-chih*) there are recorded hundreds of names of these retreats, with much information as to their dates of institution and of reconstruction, and many of their dates go back to pre-T'ang times. Throughout the whole province there is a wealth of monuments of Buddhist art, connected with the temples and monasteries. In the north there are the sandstone caves of Yün-kang at Ta-t'ung Fu, where hundreds of impressive Buddhistic figures, sculptured *in situ* in the solid rock, have been preserved since they were carved. They date from about A.D. 460 to about the middle of the sixth century, and the figures show strong influence of Indian models. At T'ien-lung Shan, until recently, there were also figures carved in Indian style in the caves, which date back to the seventh and eighth centuries.

In the ninth century there was a suppression of Buddhism, and the temples fell into dilapidation, but by the beginning of the tenth century there was a revival of that religion, and many new temples were built and the old ones restored and re-decorated. But the rivalries of the Taoists were always a trouble to the Buddhists, and during the years first one and then the other of these two religions would be favoured.

In the year 1112, during the reign of the Emperor Hui Tsung whose court was at Pien-ching (afterwards Pien-liang and then K'aifeng), the Taoists came into power, and they set about to eliminate Buddhism. The Emperor took to himself Taoist titles of divinity. Taoist figures were made in great abundance, Taoist temples endowed, and Taoist legends and traditions were collected and written down by Imperial mandate, and everything Taoist was given honour and precedence. The Emperor's spiritual adviser in this was Lin Ling-su, a native of Wên-chou, who in early life was a candidate for the Buddhist priesthood, but being disciplined for misdemeanours he left Buddhism and joined the Taoists, and had retained a bitter enmity against the Buddhists. Noted for his skill in the black art, in 1111 he was brought to the notice of the Emperor who was then assembling professors of magic, and over whom he soon wielded unbounded influence. In 1119 Lin obtained a decree from the Emperor transferring all Buddhist property to the Taoists, and Buddhist monks and nuns either had to retire into private life in their families, or enter Taoist monasteries. Buddha himself and his associated divinities were annexed by the Taoist pantheon, and the scholars of the period were prompted to warp Buddhist philosophy in line with Taoistic ideas. But the conception of Buddha with all his appealing attributes was too clearly impressed in the mind and heart of the people to be so easily obliterated, and moreover Lin himself fell into disfavour at court, so that before long his advice was refused and Buddhism restored to its former position.

The above is stated at length because it illustrates the ups and downs of Buddhism and Taoism, and throws light upon the intermixture of Taoist and Buddhist frescoes. Sometimes when Taoism was uppermost the Buddhist frescoes were repainted to show Taoist figures and symbolism, and the opposite would happen when Buddhism was in the ascendant. Another reason for dwelling upon the Taoist adviser Lin Ling-su is that one of the Taoist frescoes, that of the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*chap.* XIII), depicts two figures the legends of whom are associated by tradition with Lin. One is the Jade Emperor, the *Yü Huang Shang-Ti*, the worship of whom in the Taoist Trinity was instituted by Lin in 1116 by Imperial Edict. The other is Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper himself, who by incantations was said to have been conjured up from the nether-world in order that the Emperor might see him and draw his portrait. This incident is actually recorded in the official history of the Sung Dynasty (*Sung Shih, Bk. 463, p. 9*), where the description of Chên Wu, with clothing ruffled, hair dishevelled, and bare foot stamping on the snake and tortoise, is exactly as he is depicted on the fresco; which means that these Taoist frescoes at any rate may not precede the end of the Northern Sung (A.D. 1127). In 1127 Pien-ching, the capital of the Northern Sung, was overthrown by the Nü-chên or Chin Tartars, and the Sungs were forced to the south of China. The Chins now controlled south Shansi, and since Buddhism was their favourite, Taoism was for the time eclipsed. This continued until 1234 when Pien-ching (afterwards Pien-liang, and now K'aifeng), the capital of the Chins, was overthrown by the Mongols of Ogotai Khan, and south Shansi came under Mongol rule.

Most of the frescoes and religious figures from Shansi, which have found their way into the collections of Western museums, have come from the periods of Chin (A.D. 1115-1234), of the Yüan State (A.D. 1206-1280), and of the Yüan Dynasty (A.D. 1280-1368). On the whole they have appeared without any data as to locality or associated objects, or any clue allowing of definite dating. In many of the temples of south Shansi may still be seen carved lotus bases which had formed the pedestals of wooden figures now set up in the museums of various countries; and in the courtyards of the temples, or inlaid in the walls in many cases, are to be found inscribed stone tablets which could give historical facts and dates, and be of inestimable value in chronological classification. But the objects unfortunately are separated from this evidence, and so the task of classification must wait until more peaceful times will allow

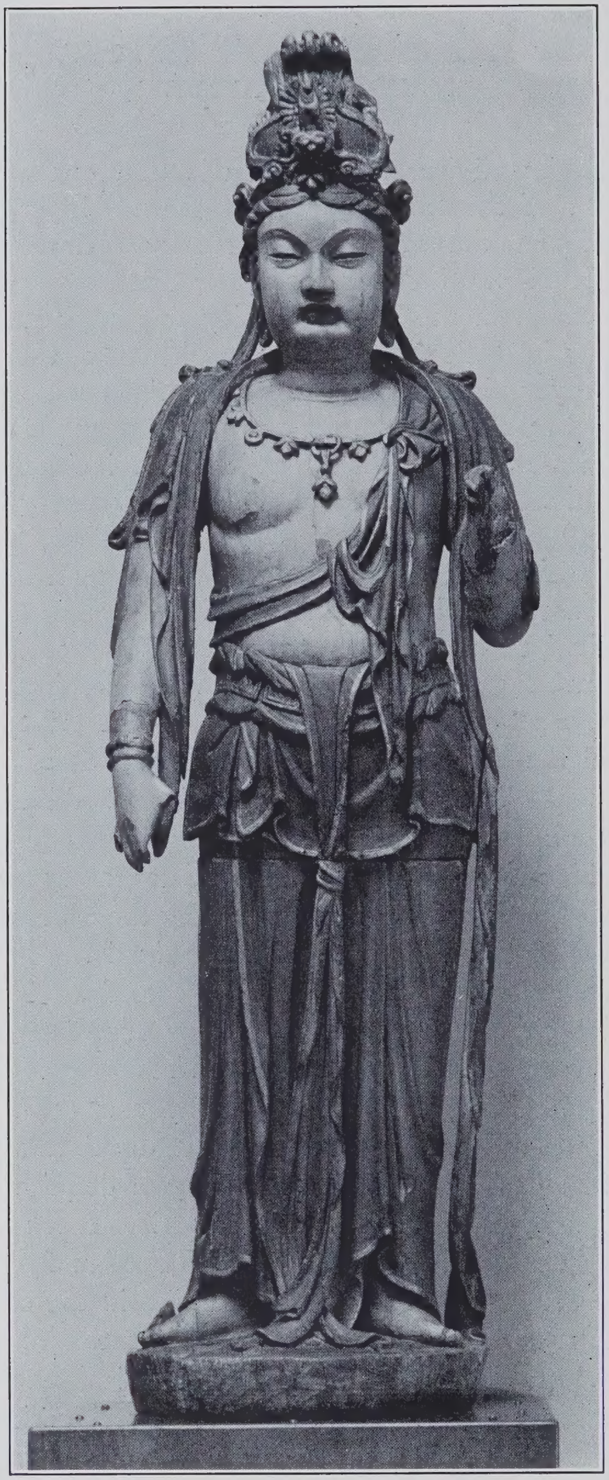
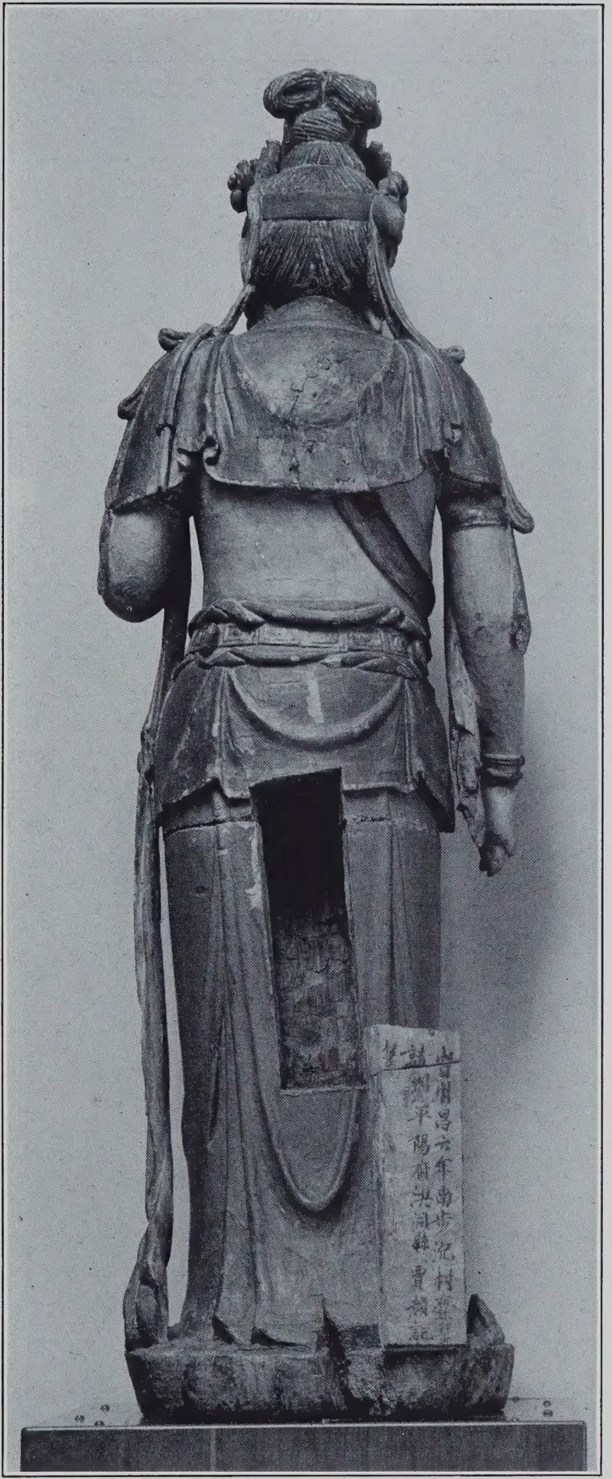


FIGURE 8A

Wooden Figure from a Hung-tung Temple: Front View.
Height 6 feet 4 inches. Dated A.D. *1195. Royal Ontario Museum.*



峕明昌六年南步泥村櫐行者請道平陽府洪洞縣賈顏記筆

FIGURE 8B

Wooden Figure from a Hung-tung Temple: Back View.
Height 6 feet 4 inches. Dated A.D. 1195. Royal Ontario Museum.

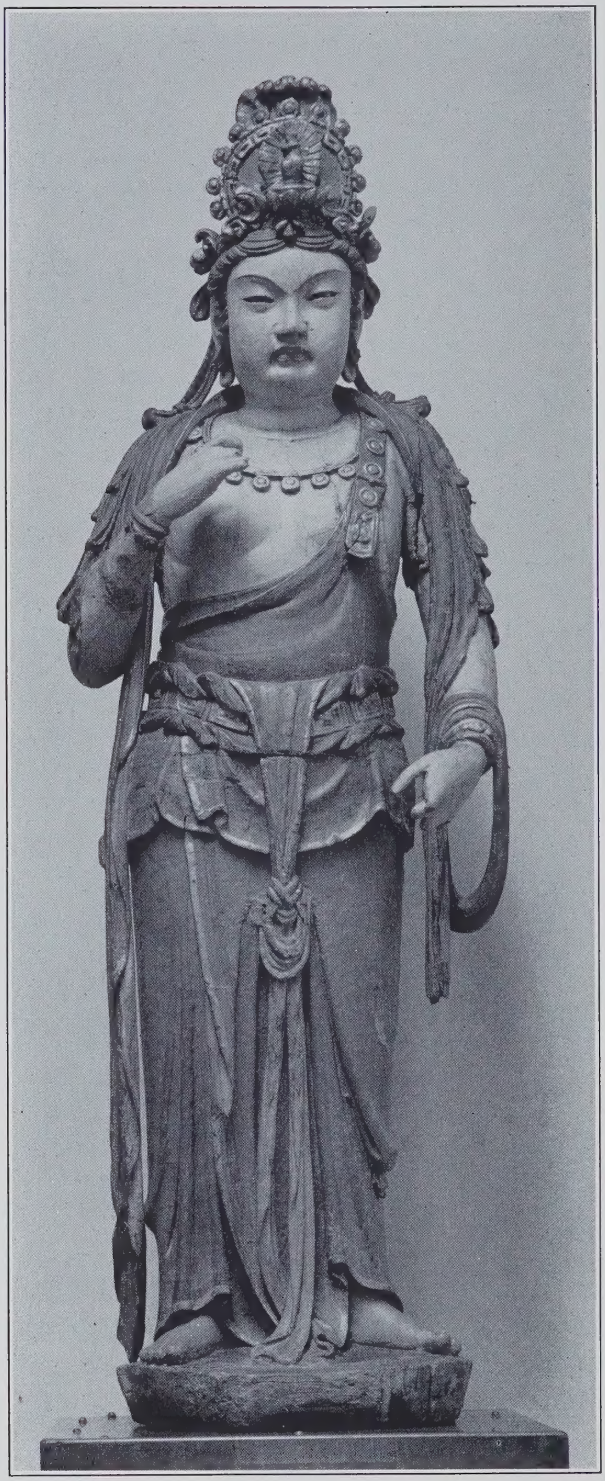


FIGURE 9A

Wooden Figure from a Hung-tung Temple: Front View.
Height 6 feet 3 inches. Paired with Fig. 8. Date A.D. 1195. Royal Ontario Museum.

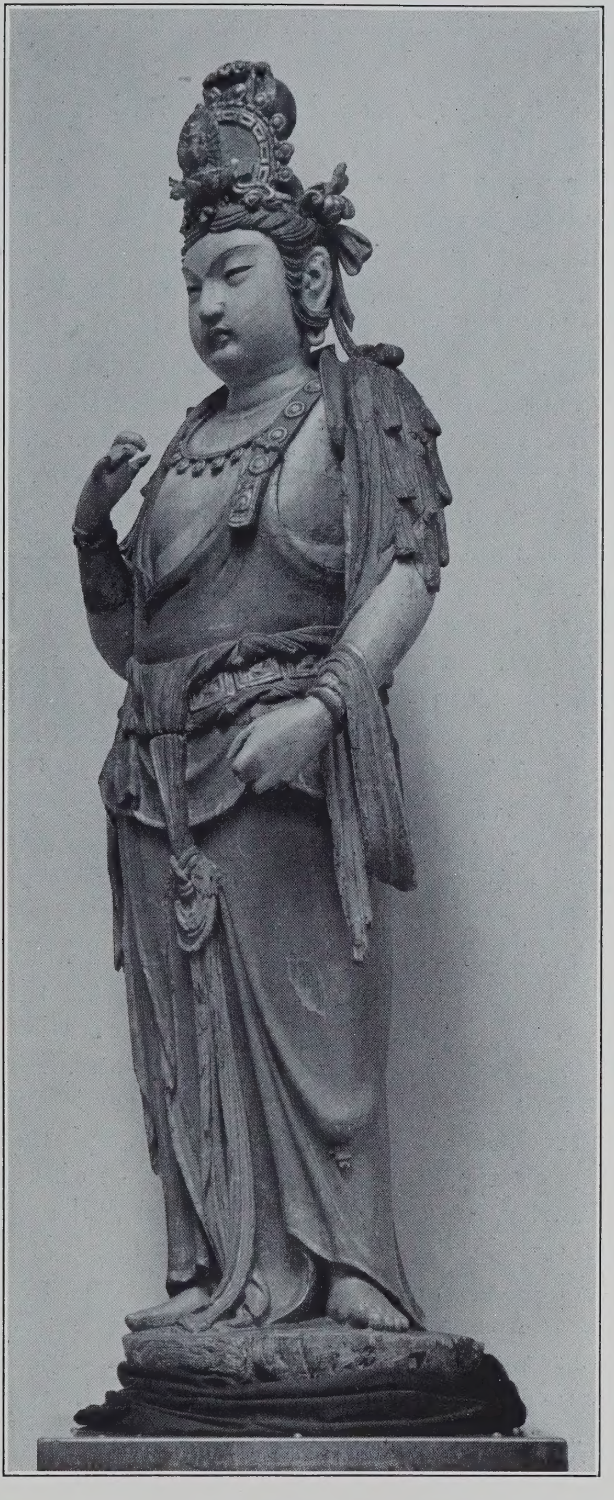


FIGURE 9B

Wooden Figure from a Hung-tung Temple: Side View.
Height 6 feet 3 inches. Paired with Fig. 8. Date A.D. 1195. Royal Ontario Museum.

of a scientific investigation of the material still remaining in the temples.

Meanwhile any evidence that may be forthcoming which will allow of tentative groupings of such material now in the collections should be used to the full. In the Toronto Museum are two important groups of objects, to which are attached evidences concerning their dates. One is a group of wooden temple figures from south Shansi (*Figs. 8 and 9*), in most cases above life-size, one figure of which carries a date equivalent to 1195, which is the sixth year of the Chin or Golden Tartar Emperor Ming Ch'ang. This group is dealt with in a separate chapter below (*chap.* VII).

The other group is that of wall-paintings from temples in the same locality, the most important of which are the three frescoes of this study. One of these frescoes, that of the Paradise of the Buddha Maitreya (*chap.* XII), comes from the well-known Monastery of Joyful Transformation, the Hsing Hua Ssu, situated nine miles south of the county-town of Chi-shan, and about forty miles south-west of P'ing-yang (*Map, p. 5*). This fresco has associated with it "the *wu hsü* year of the Great Yüan State," which is the year 1238, and was shortly after the Chins were overthrown in that area by the Yüans or Mongols. Further details of this Monastery are given in the following chapter, which records first-hand information from local investigators.

The two Taoist frescoes are a pair from the hall of a temple in the P'ing-yang area in south Shansi, but neither the temple nor even the town can be determined. The information that came with them was that they were from the Lung-men Ssu, that is the Dragon Gate Monastery, at Ch'ü-wu Hsien near P'ing-yang. The two Chinese students who investigated the temples could find no trace of a Lung-men Monastery either in that district or in the other counties they covered, and they could find no reference to such a monastery in the local gazetteers. There is a Lung-men just west of Chi-shan, where the Buddhist fresco was located, but it gets its name from the narrowing of the Yellow River at that point. There are important temples in that locality, and it is just possible that these two frescoes may have come from one of them. This place was visited by M. Edouard Chavannes, who travelled throughout that region in 1907 (*Mission Archéologique dans la Chine Septentrionale, Pl.* CCCCLVII; *Chavannes, Paris, 1909*). The style of the paintings is very like that of the Buddhist fresco from Chi-shan, and doubtless the same school of artists had to do with both, but the fact that one is purely Buddhist and the other two are entirely Taoist, must point to the two as coming from a Taoist temple, and to their having been drawn in a period when Taoism was in favour. This would seem to indicate a pre-Yüan period, for both the Chin Tartars and the Yüans were opposed to Taoism and strongly favoured Buddhism. On a decorative border of the garments of one of the figures of the Lord of the Southern Dipper fresco is an inscription, evidently a graffito written later, which reads, "In the second year of Chih P'ing [A.D. 1065] of the Great Sung, this [temple] was renovated; this is specially [written] to let it be known, please!" (*Ta Sung Chih P'ing êrh nien ch'ung hsiu t'ê tz'u ta chih chi ch'ing*)(*Fig. 70*). On these two frescoes are many names of persons, some written in red ink, others in the usual black ink. One of the surnames is the double surname *Shang-kuan*, which name is common in the local gazetteers, but none of the given names has been found in the records. These names may have been written by school-boys who read in the temple, or visitors, and some of the names though written in Chinese script appear not to be Chinese for they are not found among Chinese surnames.

From their similarity in style and technique to the Buddhist fresco, and their common locality, it must be assumed that these two Taoist frescoes belong somewhere in the middle of the thirteenth century, and are from the P'ing-yang area. One matter which should have a corroborative bearing on the date of the frescoes, is that of the illustrations which accompany the dated MSS of the Tripitaka now in Japan (*The Tripitaka in Chinese,—Picture Section; Takakusu and Ono, Tokyo, vol.* XII). These dated documents are in some cases accompanied by illustrations which are remarkably similar both in subject-matter and in style to the fresco figures. Dates of such illustrations are given sometimes in the reigns of Sung rulers, or the Chin Tartars, or the Japanese, and among these dates are 1115, 1153, 1164, 1211, 1332, together with many more, by which it is seen that they parallel the period of the frescoes and wooden figures of south Shansi.

It is also worth noting that a Chin period (1115-1234), or possibly late Sung, Tripitaka, is stored in the Kuang Shêng Monastery, Shansi, whence the large Kansas City fresco came, and where other frescoes are still intact (*cf. chaps.* II *and* VI); while reprints of Sung editions from the collection of that monastery have recently been published by the Commercial Press of Shanghai, under the title of "Precious Books of Sung" (*Sung ts'ang i chên*). A scroll dated the ninth year of Huang T'ung of Chin (A.D. 1149) is still preserved in the collection.

VI

LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS

IN the summer of 1938 two Chinese students from a school in Hung-tung Hsien, Shansi, were sent to visit certain temples in the P'ing-yang area, with a view to obtaining information concerning the present condition of the temples from which wall-paintings were known to have come. The two main temple-groups visited were those of the Hsing Hua Ssu of Chi-shan Hsien, whence the Toronto Buddhist fresco came, and the Kuang Shêng Ssu of Chao-ch'êng Hsien, near Hung-tung Hsien, where the Kansas City fresco was obtained, but also many other temple sites were visited by the students in that area. The following are extracts, somewhat clarified, from the detailed reports of the two men, concerning these two main groups, which were forwarded to the Toronto Museum (*Figs. 10 and 11*).

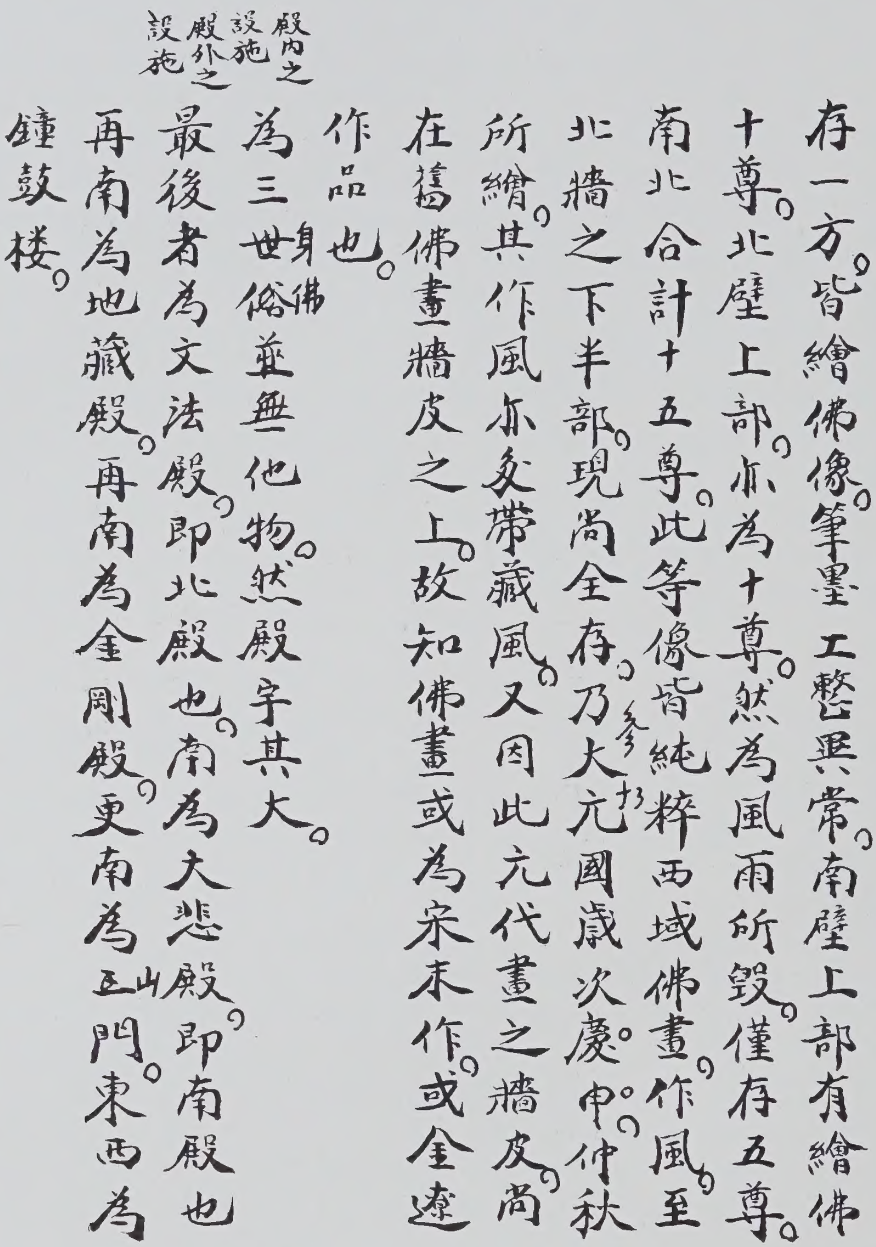
A. The Hsing Hua Monastery of Chi-shan Hsien

There are really two monasteries of this name: one known as the Northern Monastery is situated at Hsiao-ning Ts'un (Little Peace Village), thirty *li* (nine miles) south-west of the county-town of Chi-shan; and the other known as the Southern Monastery is situated at Chang Pa Ts'un, fifty *li* (fifteen miles) south of Chi-shan.

1. In the Northern Monastery of the Hsing Hua Ssu there is what is known as the North Hall, which is its most important building. Its origin and development were not investigated, but it was learnt that this Hall was established in the twelfth year of the K'ai Huang era of the Sui Dynasty (A.D. 592), and that it was restored in the twenty-sixth year of Wan Li (A.D. 1598), and again in the forty-seventh year of Ch'ien Lung (A.D. 1782), and this has continued to the present day.

The popular local name for the Hsing Hua Monastery is the "Divine Painting Monastery" (*Shên Hua Ssu*), the people erroneously believing that because the wall-painting was so very good, it must be the "Divine Painting Monastery."

There are inscribed stone monuments connected with this Temple, one being erected in the twenty-sixth year of Wan Li, and the other in the forty-seventh year of Ch'ien Lung.



存一方。皆繪佛像。筆墨工整異常。南壁上部有繪佛
十尊。北壁上部亦為十尊。然為風雨所毀。僅存五尊。
南北合計十五尊。此等像皆純粹西域佛畫。作風。至
北牆之下半部。現尚全存。乃（叅）大（扐）元國歲次慶申。仲秋
所繪。其作風亦多帶藏風。又因此元代畫之牆皮。尚
在舊佛畫牆皮之上。故知佛畫或為宋末作。或金遼
作品也。

殿內之設施

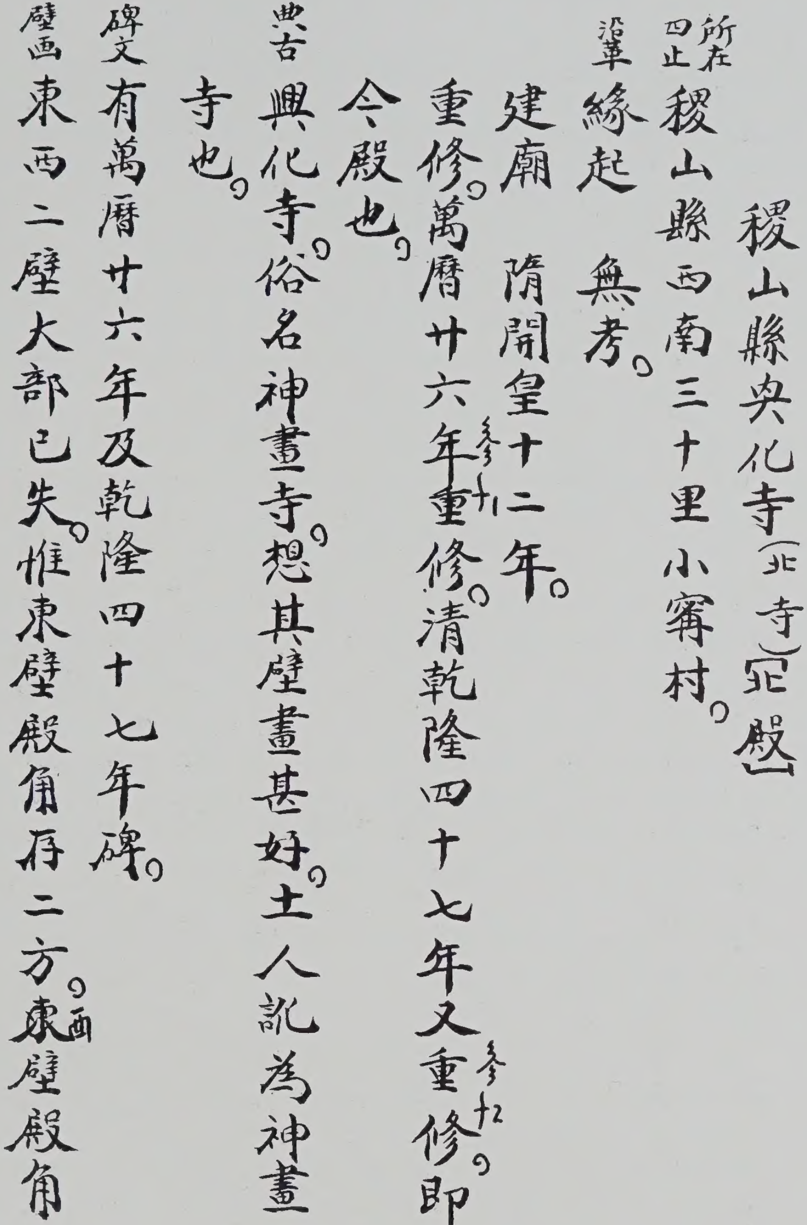
為三世（身）俗（佛）並無他物。然殿宇甚大。

殿外之設施

最後者為文法殿。即北殿也。南為大悲殿。即南殿也
再南為地藏殿。再南為金剛殿。更南為正山門。東西為
鐘鼓樓。

FIGURE 10B

Facsimile of Report of Two Chinese Students. Second Page.
Script Uncorrected. (Read from right to left.)



稷山縣興化寺(北寺)正殿

（所在四止）稷山縣西南三十里小寧村。

（沿革）緣起　無考。

建廟　隋開皇十二年。

重修。萬曆廿六年（參九）重修。清乾隆四十七年又重（參九）修。即今殿也。

（典古）興化寺。俗名神畫寺。想其壁畫甚好。土人訛為神畫寺也。

（碑文）有萬曆廿六年及乾隆四十七年碑。

（壁畫）東西二壁大部已失。惟東壁殿角存二方。東（西）壁殿角

FIGURE 10 A

Facsimile of Report of Two Chinese Students. First Page. Errors of Composition and Transcription Uncorrected.

As to the wall-paintings, on the east and west walls [the gable ends], the greater part of the pictures had already disappeared, and there only remained two fragments on the temple-corner of the east wall, and one fragment on the temple-corner of the west wall. All the drawings [of the two walls] were of Buddhist figures, and the brush and ink work was unusually good. On the upper part of the south wall were painted ten Buddhist divinities, and on the upper part of the north wall there were also ten divinities, but these latter had been ruined by wind and rain, barely retaining five of the divinities, so that the total [remaining] of the south and north walls numbered but fifteen divinities. The style of these pictures was that of Buddhist paintings of the Western Regions (*Hsi Yü*). In regard to the lower part of the section of the north wall [the pictures] are at present fully retained. It was in the Great Yüan State, the year *ch'ing shên* [this is a mistake in transcription, and should be *wu hsü*, A.D. 1238], in mid-autumn, that the frescoes were painted, and their style of making blends with the Tibetan style. Moreover, because this Yüan period painting of the wall surface is above that of the old Buddhistic painted wall surface, we know that the Buddhist painting was made either in the latter part of the Sung, or else is the product of the Chin (Golden) or Liao (Tartar) Dynasties (Liao, 907-1168; Chin or Nü-chên, 1115-1234).

The above passage is vague but implies that some of the Yüan painting was in evidence as being later and applied above the earlier Sung painting. There is historical evidence for this procedure in the ups and downs of Taoism and Buddhism, changes being made on the temple frescoes according to the current dominance of the one or the other of these rival religions.

As to the contents of the North Hall, it contained only a Buddhist Trinity (San Shên Fu) of figures, and nothing else although the hall was large. At the outside of this hall there is at the extreme back the Hall of the Sutras (*Wên Fa Tien*), which is the northern hall, and on the south there is the Hall of Great Compassion (*Ta Pei Tien*), which is the southern hall. South of this again is the Hall of Kshitigarbha, the Buddha of the Nether Regions (*Ti Tsang Tien*); and farther south still is the Hall of the "Diamond" Kings, the Four Guardians (*Chin Kang Tien*); and beyond this on the extreme south is the Shan Mên, the main entrance gateway. On the west and east of the Monastery enclosure are two towers, one the Bell Tower (*Chung Lou*) and the other the Drum Tower (*Ku Lou*).

2. In regard to the South Hall of the Northern Monastery, it is located to the south of the North Hall, and was built somewhat later than the North Hall, though it is similar to it in its construction, but having been renovated in the fourteenth year of the Chinese Republic (1926) according to the inscribed memorial stone of that date, its style is quite modern.

Wall-paintings still remain on the east and north walls, but those of the west and south walls are missing. Upon examination it would appear that the paintings of the east and north walls belong to a period later than the middle of the Ming Dynasty (about 1500). They are secular in their theme, and are entirely in Chinese style, yet the paintings are of very good quality. Concerning the mysterious loss of the missing frescoes it is said that in 1926 a person paid a large sum for these paintings, including those of the North Hall, and that their whereabouts are now unknown, but the gaps on the walls have been plastered over with mortar.

Inside this Hall are to be found only one Buddha, two Guardians and eighteen Lohans [*Fig. 2A*].

According to the principles of temple architecture, this Hall should really be the corridor (*kuo t'ing*) between the North and South, but the Hall has no south entrance (*mên*), and the figures are orientated facing north. The outside of the Hall is similar to that of the North Hall [*Fig. 2B*].

3. There is another Hsing Hua Ssu, which is known as the Southern Monastery, situated at the village of Chang Pa which is fifty *li* [fifteen miles] south of Chi-shan Hsien. It was established in the fifth year of Hsien Hêng of the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 674), and contained an inscribed stone of the K'ai Huang period (581-601) which is now lost. The temple enclosure is quite extensive, but the place is in ruins, and the only buildings are two reconstructed temples (*miao*), one being the Temple of the Three Officials and the Four Saints (*San Kuan Ssu Shêng Miao*), and the other the Western Monastery (*Hsi Ssu*). The only relic of antiquity in the place is a foundation of a small pagoda, which is commonly known as Ssu Ch'u Ta, which may possibly be an ancient name.

In addition to the above description the students sent a copy of an inscription from a record in the Northern Monastery which was connected with the North Hall, the Hall presumably from which the Toronto fresco came (*Fig. 11*). A translation of this inscription is as follows:

> In the courtyard, [it is recorded that] provision was made for the painting of the Lord [Buddha] of the Great Hero Hall (*Ta Hsiung Tien Chu*):
>
> The Teacher-priest, the monk An, gave land.
> The Teacher-priest, the monk Ning, gave land.
> The monk Ning also gave twelve *mou* of land.
>
> The provisional Han-lin poet-scholar, who painted the picture, was Chu Hao-ku, of Hsiang-ling Hsien, and his pupil was Chang Po-yüan. The Great Yüan State, the period *wu hsü* (A.D. 1238), in the mid-autumn month, on the fourteenth growing-leaf [day], the work was completed.

It is not clear whether the above inscription is from a stone monument set up in the courtyard of the North Hall, or whether it is an inscription written on a fragment of the fresco still remaining on the wall. From the fact that Professor Li Chi-chih of Tsing Hua University, Peking, visited this Monastery in 1926 and found the above date-paragraph "on the wall," we may assume that the whole inscription was on the wall (*China Journal, April 1927, p. 178*). The date-paragraph as given by Dr. Li (*Fig. 11B*) and the two students (*Fig. 11A*) is in identical poetical language, and is obviously the same inscription, but the cyclical year is different in the two cases. That given by the students is *ch'ing shên*,—definitely a mistake for there is no cyclical date of that name, and that given by Dr. Li is *wu hsü*, which is the year 1238. The latter must be accepted as the proper date, and the former must have been an erroneous transcription, probably due to defects of the fresco surface, causing difficulties in deciphering the characters.

There is also another difference, in that Dr. Li's transcription begins with the additional word "time" (*shih*), while the date-paragraph of the students omits it. The former may be accepted as correct, and it has a parallel in the inscription of the dated wooden figure of 1195 (*chap.* VII), which also begins with the character for "time" (*Fig. 8B*), written in an archaic and unusual form, which may not have been familiar to the students, and the same form and idiom is found in the inscription of 1324 on the Ming Ying Wang Tien inscription (*chap.* II). The date-paragraph given by Dr. Li Chi-chih reads literally:

> The time [of painting] was during the Great Yüan State, in the cyclical year *wu hsü* (A.D. 1238); and in the mid-autumn month, when the Ming plant produced its fourteenth leaf, the work was completed.

The Ming plant is a poetical name for month when designating the days of the month. It is of legendary origin, and is said to be the name of a plant which grew in the palace of Emperor Yao (2356 B.C.) which produced a new leaf every day from the first to the fifteenth of the moon, and dropped a leaf each day from the sixteenth to the thirtieth. For instance the "producing of the fourteenth leaf" would be the fourteenth day of the month, while the "dropping of the fourteenth leaf" would be the twenty-ninth

當院賄繪畫大雄殿主

講經沙門　安和尚施地

講經沙門　寧和尚施地

寧和尚又施地壹拾貳畝

襄陵縣　繪㞷°（畫）特°（待）詔　朱好古　門徒張伯淵

A

大元國歲次慶°申°仲秋蓂生十四蓁°　工畢

B

時大元國歲次戊戌仲秋蓂生十四葉　工畢

FIGURE 11

Transcription of Record in the Hsing Hua Monastery.

A. The Date Clause given by the Student Investigators.

B. The Date Clause given by Dr. Li Chi-chih. (See chap. VI.)

day of the month. Incidentally the fourteenth day of the mid-autumn month would be the eve of the great autumn festival, when the moon and other stellar deities, and certain Buddhist divinities are specially worshipped.

The inscription implies that the Buddha in this Hall, which was the Ta Hsiung Tien, was the focal centre for the fresco compositions, the provision for the painting of which was made by the two Buddhist monks, An and Ning; and that the painter was one Chu, whose personal name was Hao-ku, "Fond of the Ancient," whose standing was that of a Han-lin scholar, and whose home was at Hsiang-ling, a town near P'ing-yang, and just twenty-five miles distant from Chi-shan.

B. The Kuang Shêng Monastery of Chao-ch'êng Hsien

In this monastery also there are two groups of buildings, known as the Upper Monastery and the Lower Monastery. The monastery is located forty *li* (twelve miles) south-east of the county-town of Chao-ch'êng, and about the same distance north of Hung-tung city. The Upper Monastery is located on the top of a hill, at the foot of which is a famous and bountiful spring of water, which for centuries has been harnessed for irrigation purposes. The large thirteen-storied pagoda is an outstanding landmark (*Fig. 4*). The Lower Monastery lies at the foot of the hill, and close to the spring (*Fig. 3*).

In centuries gone by the monastery seems to have been an important teaching institution of contemplative Buddhism, and the name over its main entrance today is the "Meditation College of the Extensive Victory" (*Kuang Shêng Ch'an Yüan*). Its library was widely known and prized, and Sutras of the Sung and Chin periods have recently been published from the original copies of the monastery.

1. The Upper Monastery of the Kuang Shêng Ssu

There is much of a legendary nature given concerning the origin of this monastery, but the earliest reliable date is that of the second year of Pao Ting of the Northern Chou Dynasty (A.D. 562) when a holy monk, Chiang Fa, came to this place to worship, and being the custodian of a "Sarira-stupa"—

a reliquary—he obtained permission to build a pagoda on the spot where presumably the sacred relic was deposited.

In 769 an official (*chieh tu shih*) from the north country (*shuo fang*) by the name of Kuo Tzu-i, on the ground of a pagoda already being situated there, petitioned and obtained permission to erect the Kuang Shêng Monastery on that spot.

The buildings were renovated during the Chêng Te period (A.D. 1506-1522), at which time glazed tiles took the place of the brick facing of the pagoda; and again in 1623 and 1657.

Not far away is a stone convent, which was originally the eating quarters of the workmen when the pagoda was erected. There is a fragment of a stone inscription of the T'ai Tsung period (A.D. 627-650) which was re-cut at the beginning of the Sung Dynasty (A.D. 960); and also one of A.D. 769 which was re-cut in the first year of Chih P'ing (A.D. 1064). These are both kept on the top of the wall in the back temple (*Hou tien*). In this back temple there are Buddhist paintings, which appear to belong to the beginning of Yüan, because they are of the style of Tibetan paintings. The figures (*Fig. 6, tsao hsiang*) in this back temple are particularly beautiful. They are a Buddhist Trinity, four Bodhisattvas (*ssu chih p'u sa*), and eighteen Lohans, and in side rooms were Lohans of purely Chinese style, not seen in other temples, and which may have been made at a later period.

In the front temple (*Ch'ien tien*) there are no paintings, but the walls are newly plastered and coarsely done. Probably there had been old paintings which were removed, but there is no evidence regarding them. This front temple is called the Great Hero Temple (*Ta Hsiung Tien*), and it is there that the "Thus-come Buddha" (Ju-lai Fo) was worshipped.

To sum up, in the Monastery enclosure the building farthest back is the Buddhist Trinity temple, in front of this is the "Great Hero Precious Temple," and in front of this again is the temple of the Lokapalas (Hu Fa Tien), and then there is the pagoda enclosure. In the lowest storey of the pagoda there is a seated bronze Buddha about twenty feet in height.

2. The Lower Monastery of the Kuang Shêng Ssu (*Fig. 3*).

This is on the west slope of the hill and more than two *li* [under a mile] from the Upper Monastery. It was erected first in the Ta Li period (A.D. 766-780), and has been renovated from time to time, the last occasion being in 1930, when it was restored with the funds obtained from the sale of its frescoes. These frescoes were sold in 1930 and their present location is not known. On the walls there remain but two small fragments, which show they were Buddhist pictures, with a style and character purely of the Western Regions (*Hsi Yü*), and there is nothing to indicate the period. The walls they occupied are now plastered with white lime.

The Central Hall (*Chêng Tien*) was where the Sutras were kept (*Fig. 5*). In this Hall there were more than ten cupboards in which the Sutras were stored, but they are no longer there. There is a Buddhist Trinity in the temple, the figures of which are very beautiful.

As to the lay-out of the buildings, in the north there is a Temple of Buddha, and to the south there is one with the Bodhisattva of the Thousand Hands. Still farther south are the Lokapalas (*Hu Hua Shên*); and to right and left of the main entrance (*Shan Mên*) are side rooms, but they have no figures in them.

In the above description of the Lower Monastery of Kuang Shêng Ssu, the two students touched only on the Buddhist Temple of the group, and failed to describe the important subsidiary temple hall known as the Ming Ying Wang Tien (*Fig. 3*).

The frescoes of the Buddhist Temple had been removed, and in this case, as in other temples of this area, the removal and sale of the frescoes had coincided with the renovation and repairs of the temples,—which is very suggestive.

As pointed out above (*chap.* II), this Ming Ying Wang Tien has been personally visited by Mr. Laurence Sickman, who has revealed that the four walls are covered with non-Buddhist paintings of high quality, and in good condition, and that evidence abundantly proves that the frescoes were made in the first quarter of the fourteenth century.

VII

CONTEMPORARY WOODEN FIGURES

AN important parallel to the temple frescoes is that of Buddhistic figures from the same or associated temples in the same district. It has been pointed out that the frescoes formed a background to the religious figures, moulded in plaster or carved in wood, which were invariably placed in front of the paintings (*Fig. 2*).

The motives which led to the painting of such temple frescoes are doubtless various, but the main one surely is the aesthetic one, the surrounding of the deities with a suitable religious environment. It is not the wall-paintings which are worshipped, and before which incense is burnt and prayers offered, but the figures in the round which are set out in front of them.

We have no authentic evidence of the kind of figures which were placed before the two Taoist frescoes, or set out in the hall whence they came, but they would probably be deities from the thousands to be found in the Taoist pantheon. On the other hand, we have definite eye-witness descriptions of the figures in the halls of the Hsing Hua Monastery (*chap.* VI), and in these halls small fragments of the frescoes still adhere to the walls, and figures of deities and Buddhist Lohans are still ranged along the sides, but mostly dilapidated and uncared for (*Fig. 2*).

Two Chinese Christian students from Hung-tung Hsien visited and investigated many temples in the P'ing-yang Fu area, and saw and described their contents, and took photographs of the buildings and the carved figures still remaining (*Figs. 1 to 6*). They were amateurs in photography; some of their photographs, therefore, were not good enough for reproduction, but even the imperfect ones had their value sometimes in showing the style of the carved wooden figures remaining in the halls. One of the culled prints of a photograph of the interior of the North Temple of the Northern Monastery of the Hsing Hua Ssu, whence the Buddhist fresco of the Toronto Museum came, showed a Buddhistic Trinity of over-size wooden figures. In the centre was a figure seated cross-legged on a lotus flower, with circular haloes for both body and head. On each side stood a figure of an attending Bodhisattva, which appear to be similar to a pair of such figures in the Toronto Museum, which came from Hung-tung Hsien, and which are dated A.D. 1195 (*Figs. 8 and 9*).

One of the photographs here reproduced (*Fig. 2A*), shows a row of Buddhist Lohans in the South Temple of the Northern Monastery of the Hsing Hua Ssu, said to have been the hall from which the fresco in the National University of Peking was obtained. These figures appear to be moulded in clay stucco, and according to the report of the two Chinese delegates they are in disrepair and some are quite destroyed. The interesting thing is that the wall behind these Lohans is still covered with a fresco, which obviously is badly cracked and in poor condition. It is a landscape with hills and gardens and trees, and with palace buildings and terraces. At least one group of palace ladies is gathered on a terrace surveying the scenery. There is nothing definite to warrant a dating of these Lohans or the fresco, but one gets the impression, as far as an indifferent photograph will permit, that they are of the late Ming period. This is also suggested by the inscription of a stone monument set up in the courtyard, which states that the Monastery was first established in the twelfth year of K'ai Huang of the Sui Dynasty (A.D. 592), and was renovated at various times, of which one was the twenty-sixth year of the Ming Emperor Wan Li, that is A.D. 1592. The Lohans and their fresco might well belong to that period.

The two Chinese messengers started out on their tour of investigation from Hung-tung county-town, which apparently was their home, and probably for this reason it never occurred to them that the temples of their home town might be of interest to others, and since Hung-tung was not on their list they unfortunately did not describe the temples of that city. For it has recently come to light that among the carved wooden figures in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, were the pair of full-sized wooden figures mentioned above, which carry a date equivalent to the year 1195 (*Fig. 8*). This naturally is of the greatest importance,

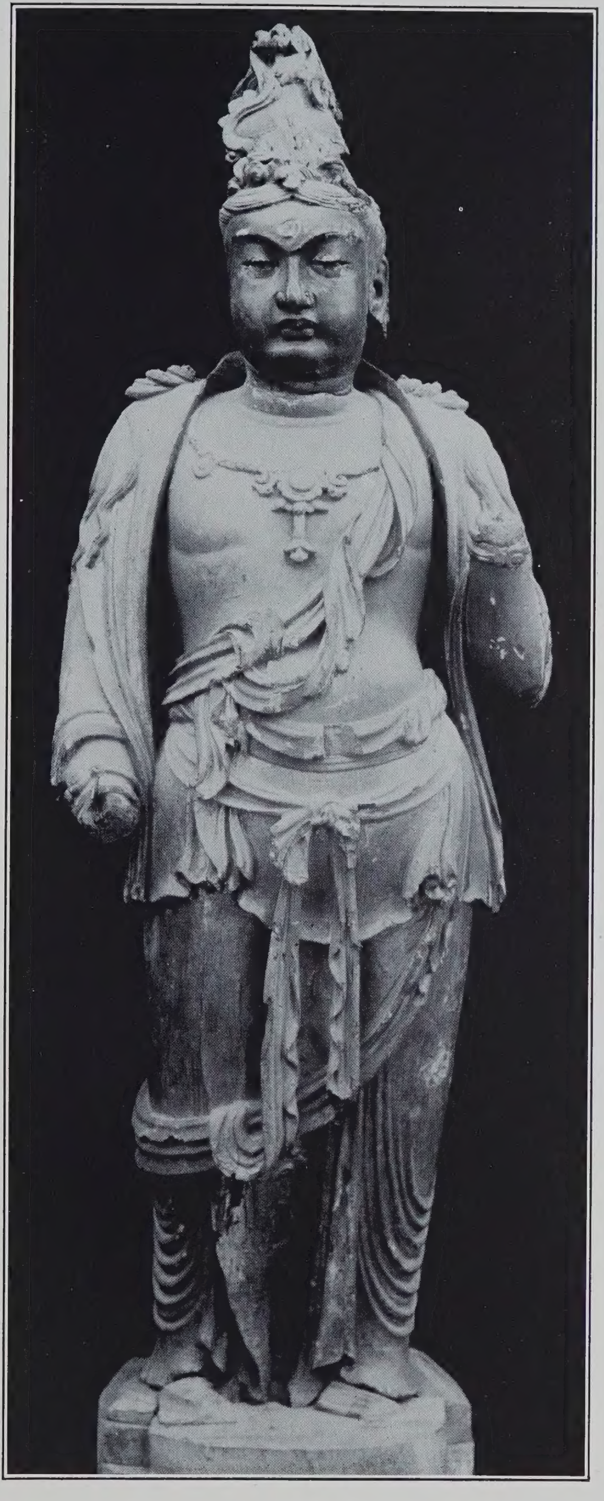


FIGURE 12

Wooden Figure from a Temple at P'u Chou Fu, Shansi.
Height 6 feet 10 inches. Royal Ontario Museum.

for it gives an authentic date for styles common to both the wall-paintings and the wooden figures, and frescoes and carved figures still remain in many of the temples of that Southern Shansi area. These two wooden figures have been discussed by Dr. Ludwig Bachhofer (*The Burlington Magazine*, *October 1938*) who rightly stresses the importance of such dated material, and who identifies them as Kuan-yin (Avalokiteśvara), the "Lord of Mercy" (*Fig. 8*), and Ta-shih-chih (Mahāstāmaprapta or Mahāsthāma), the "Lord who has obtained Strength" (*Fig. 9*). These two deities are usually found in the retinue of Amitābha, and in their original position in the temple would probably be found flanking this Buddha. Both of these Bodhisattvas are very popular, as they personify divine pity and help for suffering humanity. The great festal season for Kuan-yin is in the second month, and that for Mahāsthāma is in the seventh month. Each of these figures was carved from the wood of the *t'ung* tree, a variety of Catalpa, prized for musical instruments and coffins, and venerated in mythological lore and for religious uses. It is commonly grown in Honan and Shansi, in the area of the North China plain through which flows the Yellow River. In this case the figures were hollow, the carving being done on slabs which were then glued together to form the image, and the head and arms were carved separately and placed in position. Two sections at the back, one above, and the other below in the lower half (*Fig. 8B*), were movable, and were only glued into position after the usual objects representing the vital internal organs of the figure were placed inside. After this the figure was painted and decorated in colour, and set up in its permanent position in the temple, flanking the central figure of a Trinity. After this there took place the final ceremony which made the figure a living deity, the ceremony called the *Tien-ching*, the dotting of the pupils of the eyes, that the deity might look upon its worshippers. In the case of one of these figures, when it had been sawn across to facilitate its transportation from the interior of China, an inscription had been noted written on the interior surface of the lower section that had been inserted when the figure was set up. This had been lost sight of until 1938, as pointed out by Dr. Bachhofer,

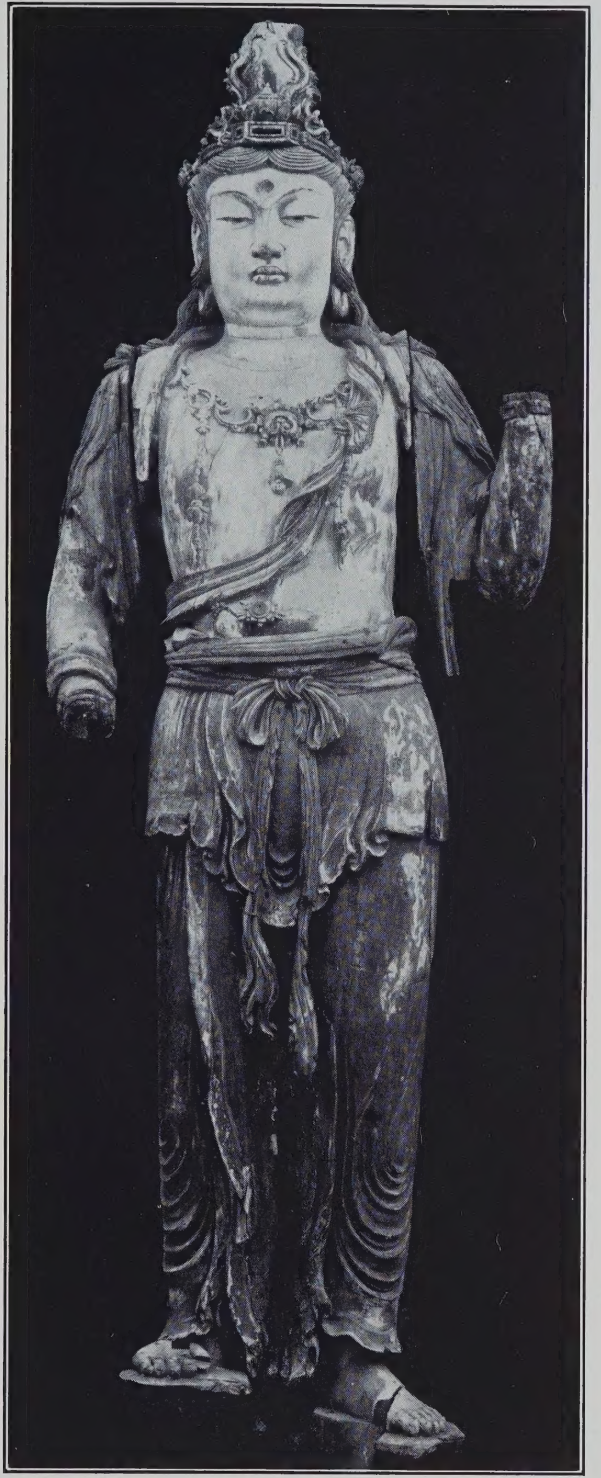


FIGURE 13

Wooden Figure from a Temple at Ta-ning Fu, Shansi.
Height 10 feet. Royal Ontario Museum.

and then the inscription was investigated and a translation made as follows:

> At the time of the sixth year of Ming Ch'ang [A.D. 1195] the abbot's attendant, Ts'uan, of the village of Nan-pu-shên, [ceremonially] invited [the deity] to Hung-tung Hsien in the prefecture of P'ing-yang. Chia Yen records [this] memorandum [*Fig. 8B*].

We do not know the name of the master-carver of the figure, but the memorandum was written by Chia Yen, probably the carpenter-artisan whose work it was to glue the section into position, after the organs of the deity had been ceremonially deposited. This latter was invariably done in the temple, under the supervision of the monks, and the artisan might obviously have taken this occasion to inscribe the essential facts, before sealing up the opening. In any case, whatever the circumstances, the importance of the inscription lies in the date, A.D. 1195, and the locality, Hung-tung Hsien.

Ming Ch'ang (A.D. 1190-1196) was the title of the first period of the reign of Chang Tsung (A.D.1190-1208), an Emperor of the Chin or Golden Tartar Dynasty. The Chins ruled over this region from 1115 to 1234, when the dynasty came to an end by the capitulation of the capital, Pien-ching (K'aifeng), to the Yüan armies of Ogotai. It should be noted in passing that the date found on the wall of the Buddhist fresco of the Hsing Hua Monastery was the *wu-hsü* year of the Yüan State, that is 1238, and would be in the time of Ogotai.

Ts'uan, the surname of the officiating Buddhist, is an unusual name, yet it is found amongst the "Hundred Surnames." It is not usual for surnames to be used by fully ordained monks or priests of Buddhism, but the fact that Ts'uan was a *hsing-tao*, literally "a walker of the Way," that is an assistant, and particularly an assistant of a Buddhist abbot, would lead to the inference that novices still used their surnames until they had been elevated to a certain degree in the priesthood.

Dr. Bachhofer deals with these carved figures from the standpoint of art, and considers that they mark the baroque attitude towards form, and that they demonstrate "that in Chinese sculp-

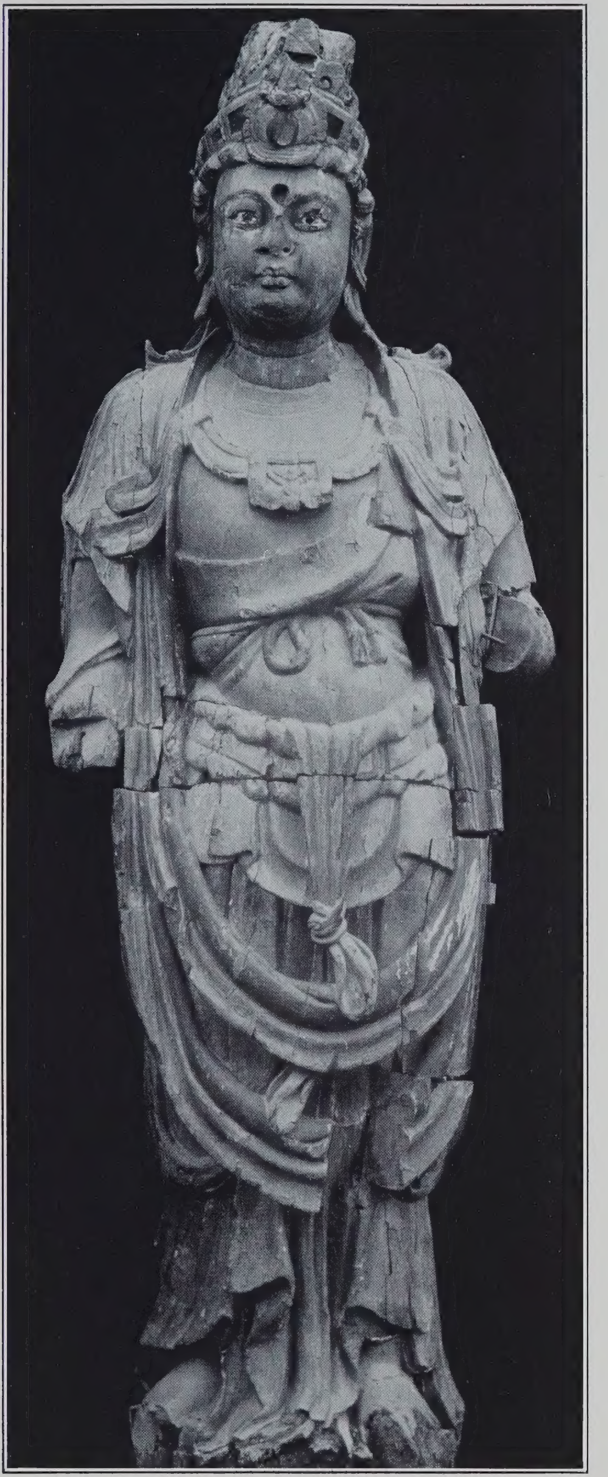


FIGURE 14

Wooden Figure from a Temple at Yung-chi Hsien, P'u Chou, Shansi.
Height 8 feet. Royal Ontario Museum.

ture its height was reached at the end of the twelfth century" (*Burlington Magazine, October 1938*).

Following this article Mr. Laurence Sickman (*Notes on Later Chinese Buddhist Art, Parnassus, April 1939*) published an article in which he relates these two figures to wall-paintings from the same region, having in mind the large Buddhist fresco now in the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, which came from the Kuang Shêng Monastery near Hung-tung Hsien; and also the Buddhist fresco of the Toronto Museum, which came from Chi-shan Hsien. The two Chinese messengers visited the Kuang Shêng Monastery, and amongst their photographs is one from the extreme inner temple of the Upper Monastery (*Shang Ssu*) of the temple buildings (*Figs. 3 to 6*). This shows two life-size wooden figures, standing one on each side of a dais upon which is a seated Buddha, and immediately in front of which is a smaller Buddha on a separate pedestal (*Fig. 6*). The two wooden figures are Mañjuśrî (*Wên Shu*), the Lord of Wisdom, and Samantabhadra (*P'u Hsien*), the Lord of Universal Kindness, each standing respectively on his lion and his elephant. The central figure of this Trinity, for it is that in spite of the small second Buddha in the centre, is seated cross-legged on a lotus flower, and is backed by a large foliate halo of intricate open-work pattern. Mr. Sickman has visited the Kuang Shêng Monastery, and has doubtless seen these wooden figures, and the other contents of the buildings, and his remarks in the above-mentioned article, pointing out the "pictorial" impression of such figures, and linking them up with the figures of the frescoes, are interesting and to the point. He rightly states that "a close relationship between Buddhist painting and sculpture is by no means limited to late work for it is characteristic of many of the seventh and eighth century cave chapels of Tun-huang, but whereas in the earlier work the similarity is one rather of style than manner of execution, it appears that through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the sculptors sought a rich pictorial effect so closely allied to painted representation of the gods that it went far beyond the proper qualities of wood, stone or clay." He further points out that the strong similarity in the ornate, baroque treatment of the two

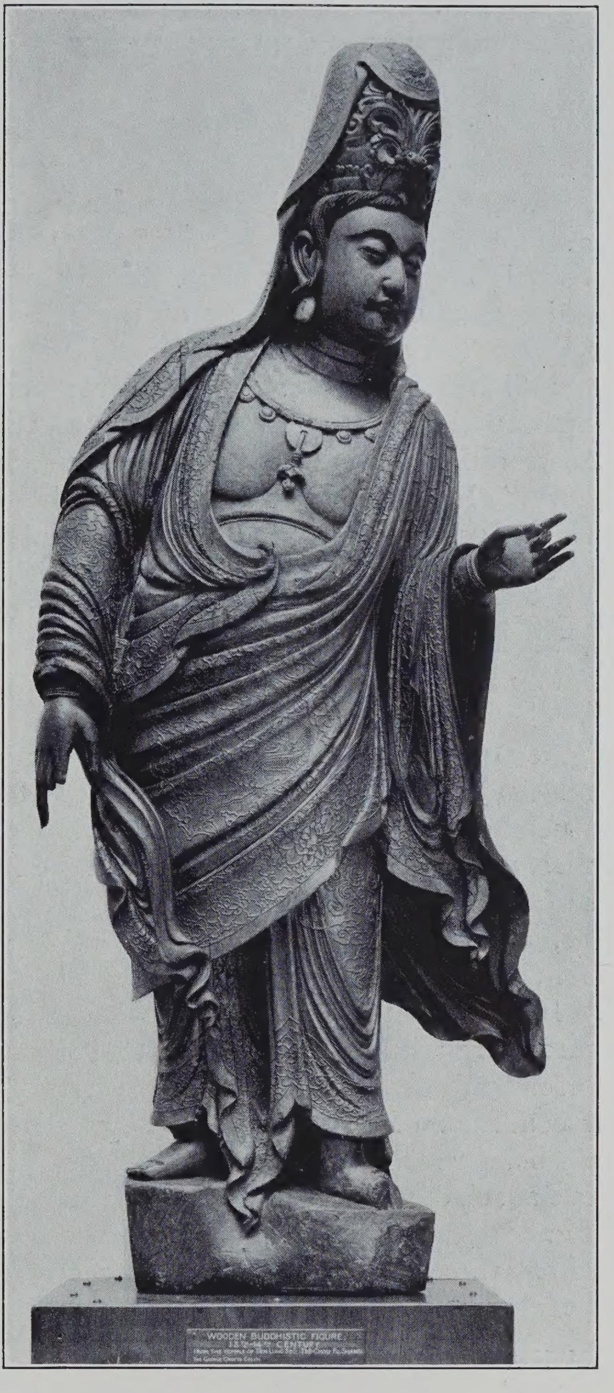

WOODEN BUDDHISTIC FIGURE

FIGURE 15

Wooden Figure from a Temple at Tsê Chou Fu, Shansi.
Height 6 feet 3 inches. Royal Ontario Museum.

Hung-tung figures clearly shows the interdependence between the two crafts, painting and sculpture, and "demonstrates the fact that the wall-paintings of this type were intended as backgrounds for sculpture, the whole creating a sumptuous if somewhat heavy effect." He recognizes the close affinities of style linking these Buddhist monuments as work of the Fên River valley, and suggests that "a further study of the well-preserved temples of south-west Shansi may reveal a Fên River valley school of skilled painter-sculptor craftsmen maintaining a high level within the accepted tradition throughout at least the whole of the thirteenth century." His reference to his own finds of inscriptions relating to seven generations of *hua-chiang*, "painter-craftsmen," of the name of Yang, who carried on in their family the work of painting and repairing the wall-paintings of the Kuang Shêng Monastery, would seem to bear out this probability.

In the Toronto Museum are many over-size wooden figures, most of which have come from Southern Shansi, and show affinities with the figures of the Buddhist fresco. Apart from P'ing-yang Fu (Lin-fên Hsien) and Hung-tung Hsien, one of the most fruitful sources for such figures must have been Yung-chi Hsien (P'u-chou Fu), for at least four of the Toronto figures came from that city (*Figs. 12 and 14*). Other Hsien from whence either frescoes or figures came, are Chao-ch'êng, Yüan-wu, Ch'ü-wu, Chieh-hsiu, Chiang Chou (*Fig. 16*), Ta-ning (*Fig. 13*), Tsê Chou (*Fig. 15*), and Lu-an Fu. In most of these places lotus-flower bases on which wooden figures formerly rested are still to be seen, as well as headless torsos and decayed fragments of carved wood. The dilapidated condition of the figures that have been recovered, and now are being cared for in various galleries throughout the world, reveals a lack of public spirit on the part of the local people, which must have allowed many works of art to become obliterated.

Apart from these over-size figures, there are smaller figures of the same character which come from these localities. The Toronto collection contains a small Bodhisattva carved from Catalpa (*ch'üan*) wood, which is but slightly over two feet in height, including its lotus base. It is said to have come from a temple in Lu-an Fu, Southern Shansi, and is similar in style to the

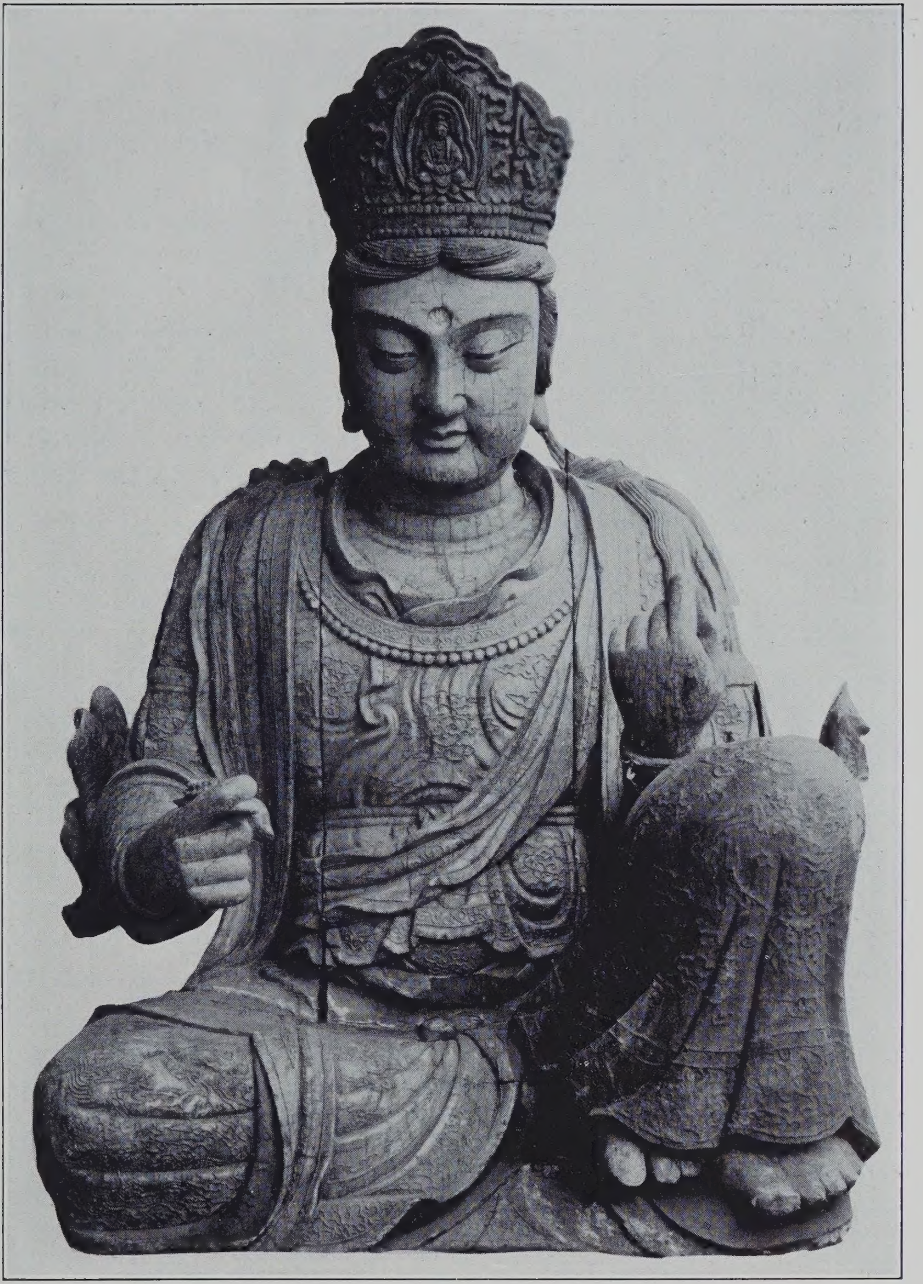


FIGURE 16

Seated Wooden Figure from a Temple at Chiang Chou, Shansi.
Height 4 feet. Royal Ontario Museum.

larger figures (*cp. Figs. 8, 9, and 13*). In the Metropolitan Museum, New York, a similar wooden statue is but seventeen inches high, and carries an inscription with the year date equivalent to A.D. 1282, that is eighty-seven years later than the large Hung-tung figures (*cp. Chinese Art, Ashton and Gray, London, 1935, Fig. 92, p. 258*). Another Kuan-yin Bodhisattva in the Toronto Museum, some three feet in height and carved from willow wood, is possibly from a temple in Honan near the south Shansi area. This figure, which also doubtless belongs to the Sung-Yüan period, is more definitely Chinese in style, the wide flowing sleeves and full robes suggesting associations with the style of the figures on the Taoist frescoes.

VIII

WU TAO-TZU, THE MASTER

ABOUT the year A.D. 700 there was born in humble circumstances, in the district of Yang-chai (Yü-chou) in Western Honan, a child who was destined to be the greatest painter China has known. His surname was Wu, and his given name was Tao-tzu, though he is also known as Tao-yüan and Tao-hsüan. In Japan he is known as Godoshi, and his influence there is great indeed, for the Horyuji frescoes of Nara are among the many paintings of Japan which are said to reveal the spirit and method of Wu. He was named the *Peh-tai Hua-shêng*, the "Prince of Painters of a Hundred Generations."

His parents died when he was quite young, and his early years were spent in great poverty. But he was endued with a divine spirit, and with a high capacity and unlimited energy for painting, so that before he had reached his sixteenth year (*ch'êng-ting*) he had become a master-painter, and his pictures abounded throughout the Lo-yang area. Lo-yang had been an ancient capital of the nation, and Wu's native place was but seventy-five miles south-east from there, while the grottoes of Lung-mên, with their sculptured reliefs of historical groupings, were on the highway that led from his home to the ancient capital, and must have been well known to the artist. He was early appointed to a small official post at Hsia-ch'iu, near Yen-chou in Shantung, but his fame having reached the ears of the Emperor at Ch'ang-an, he was summoned to the court and given the post of *Nei-chiao Po-shih*, "Doctor of the Inner (Palace) Instruction." As such it was his duty "to teach the Court ladies writing, arithmetic, and the fine arts generally." From this he was promoted to the post of Companion to Prince Ning, the brother of the Emperor, and in time he took service under the old Minister Wei Tzu-li. His duties once required that he should travel along the great highway from Ch'ang-an to Ch'êng-tu in Ssuch'uan, which inspired him to paint its magnificent and rugged scenery. The story is told that Wu returned from his tour with nothing in the way of sketches, and when the Emperor asked for an explanation, he replied, "I have it all in my heart." Then he went into one of the halls of the palace, and "in a single day he threw off a hundred miles of landscape."

The great work of Wu Tao-tzu was that of fresco painting on the temple and palace walls of Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang. He is said to have painted some three hundred frescoes, including landscapes, Buddhist deities and groupings, historical and mythological subjects, and Taoist themes, of which many were stellar deities. The catalogue of Hui Tsung's Hsüan Ho collection contains at least thirteen star-paintings purported to be by him, including "The Twenty-Eight Lunar Asterisms," "The Five Planets," and several single planets and stars. This should be borne in mind in connection with the two Taoist frescoes of this study, for their theme is entirely astrological.

After the Buddhist proscription of A.D. 845 most of the temples fell into decay, so that in the eleventh century Wu's frescoes were rare indeed. In the year 814 the poet Po Chü-i visited the Wu-chên Monastery, about twenty miles south-east of Ch'ang-an, which was noted for its wall-painting by Wu Tao-tzu, and found it as fresh as the day it was painted.

> On a plastered wall are frescoes by the hand of Wu,
> Whose pencil-colours never-fading glow.
>
> [*"The Temple,"—The Temple and Other Poems; translated by A. Waley, London, 1923.*]

But when a Sung poet, Su Shun-ch'in, visited the temple about 1040, the paintings described by Po Chü-i had all vanished.

The poet Su Tung-p'o, himself a painter and writer upon art, in 1085 stated that he knew of only one or two genuine paintings of Wu, one of which was a fresco painting at the Lung Hsing Monastery at Ju-chou, some forty miles south of Lo-yang, and not far from Wu's native town. The artist Mi Fei, writing about the same time, stated he had been able to find only four genuine Wu paintings, and pointed out that there were many spurious paintings, for "whenever people get hold of a Buddhist painting, they call it a Wu Tao-tzu; his pictures exercised so strong an influence over contemporary painters that one finds his types everywhere and it is easy to be misled." It has been suggested that Mi Fei had in mind the great number of so-called Wu paintings which shortly after found their way into the Imperial Hsüan Ho collection, and of which there were ninety-three pictures listed as painted by Wu Tao-tzu. In the vast collection of the eighteenth century of the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, only one painting is ascribed to Wu Tao-tzu.

In view of the above, it must be doubted whether there is actually a genuine specimen of Wu's painting now in existence, and we are thrown back upon historical record and unbroken tradition for any appraisement of the character and method and style of Wu Tao-tzu's paintings. Fortunately there is a mass of reliable historical evidence, testifying to the remarkable skill and inspiring influence of this master-painter, and to the attempts to grasp the secret of his greatness and to corral it for all time.

In the *Wên chien hou lu* there is a description of a picture by Wu Tao-tzu on one of the inner walls of the great hall of the K'ai-yüan (A.D. 713-756) temple at Fêng-hsiang Fu, ninety miles west of Ch'ang-an, the capital. The writer described it as he had seen it in the year 742, and because, as he said, "Fêng-hsiang is now in the hands of the enemy, and its hamlets and buildings are but heaps of ruins, therefore I have made this record." He stated that:

> Wu Tao-tzu painted incidents in the career of Buddha from his birth, his period of preparation, and his appearance as a preacher of the Law, down to his entry into Nirvana. The picture includes scenery, buildings, human figures, birds and beasts, to the number of several thousands. It is the most beautiful and perfect work of all the ages. While Buddha is passing into Nirvana, the bhikshus are beating their breasts and stamping in lamentation, as though utterly beyond self-control. Even the birds of the air and the beasts of the field are wailing and knocking their heads on the ground. Only Buddha himself is placid as usual, with no trace of anguish on his face. How could the painter have thus fathomed the mysteries of life and death? The answer is, that he was inspired [*trans. by H. A. Giles; Chinese Pictorial Art, London, 1918*].

One of Wu's favourite subjects was Chung K'uei, the exorciser of demons, a domestic god usually depicted in ragged apparel and attended by a bat. The story is told that on one occasion the Emperor, who had suffered from fever for nearly a month, saw Chung K'uei in a dream, fighting on his behalf against the fever demon. "When His Majesty awaked, the disease had left him; he therefore sent a command to Wu Tao-tzu to paint a picture of the occurrence. The latter had no sooner received this order than he seemed to see the whole scene, and at once completed the picture and took it to the Emperor. His Majesty gazed upon it for some time, and then struck the table with his hand and said, "Minister, you must have dreamt the same dream as Ourselves; or how could you have made your picture so like as this?" (*H. A. Giles; ibid.*).

Another story—for a wealth of legendary matter has grown up around the name of this great artist—is that on one occasion Wu Tao-tzu went to see some priests, and met with a somewhat rude reception. He therefore drew a donkey on a wall of the temple, and at night the furniture and other paraphernalia of the priests were all kicked to pieces. The priests were sure that this was Wu's handiwork, and begged him to erase the drawing, after which there was no more trouble (*H. A. Giles; ibid.*).

> We are told that in Wu Tao-tzu's pictures it was not the wealth of detail which so much struck the beholder as the extraordinary power he possessed of producing his effects by masterly brush-work. Further, many of his frescoes were merely ink sketches, to which later generations have never been able to supply colouring. In painting aureoles, he would use no measurements, nor even compasses, but would trace the outline with a single stroke.
>
> At a certain temple, about the year 806, there was an old man over eighty years of age, who remembered that when Wu Tao-tzu painted a god with an aureole, all the people of Ch'ang-an, young and old, scholars and labourers alike, gathered around the picture in a dense wall. The aureole was produced by a few rapid strokes, which seemed as if driven by a whirlwind; and everybody declared that his hand must have been guided by a god [*H. A. Giles; ibid.*].

This latter story, according to Waley, is recorded in the *Shu hua p'u* (46: 16), and was told by Chu Ching-hsüan, who lived in the ninth century (*Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting; A. Waley, London, 1923, p. 117*).

The following is a summary of the generally accepted characteristics of Wu Tao-tzu's style as given by Waley (*ibid., pp. 116-118*):

1. He was an extreme realist. Su Tung-p'o writes: "Wu Tao-

tzu's figures might have been drawn from lantern-shadows on the wall. They seem to walk out of the picture and back into it; they project, can be seen from each side. The flat planes and tilted angles fit into one another as though by a natural geometric law."

2. He adhered to the accepted classical canons of Chinese drawing, and never allowed his originality to violate them.

3. His extraordinary fertility of imagination and technical facility were the wonder of his contemporaries.

4. There was a sculpturesque quality in his pictures. A writer in the twelfth century, Tung Yu, says about his paintings:

> They are like sculpture. When he paints a face, the cheek-bones project, the nose is fleshy, the eyes hollow, the cheeks dimpled. But these effects are not got by heavy ink shading. The shape of the features seems to have come spontaneously, yet inevitably. If a sculptor tried to follow this method, his planes would become confused; we should not know where was the nose, the eye, the forehead, the cheek; all would be inextricably confused . . . . Wu Tao-tzu's figures remind one of sculpture. One can see them sideways and all round. His line-work consists of minute curves like rolled copper wire; however thickly his red or white paint is laid on, the structure of the forms and modelling of the flesh are never obscured (*Shu hua p'u; 81: 19*).

5. There was a grandiose quality of design in Wu's work. Even his smallest figures are said to have had a generous and imposing character of line. In all his work there was an ease and bigness which was impressive by reason of its dignity and grandeur.

Much might be said of Wu's influence upon sculpture, which was great, and of his immediate pupils and the long line of successive painters who have attempted to perpetuate the Wu tradition.

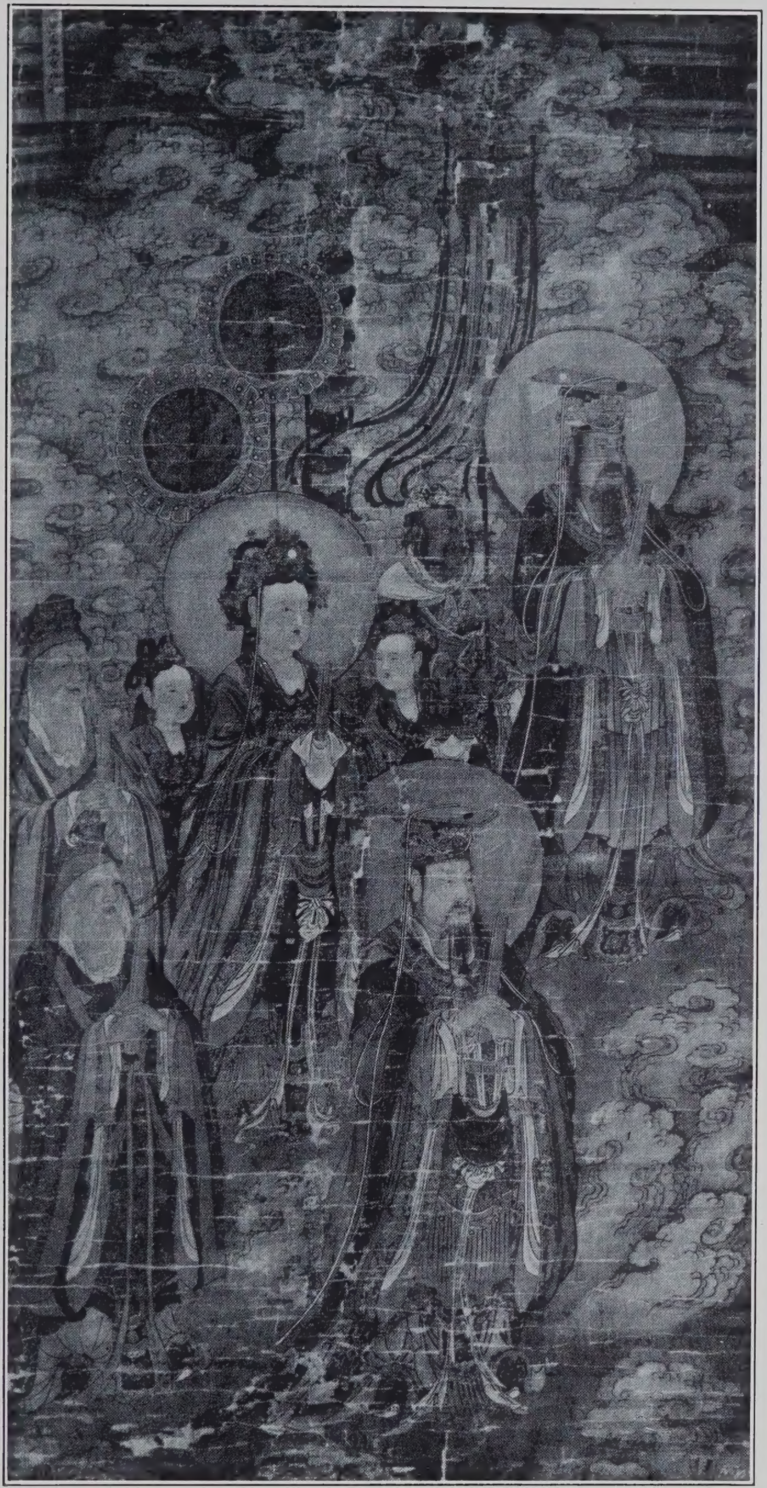
The three frescoes of this study are such as are classed under the Wu tradition, and although all the characteristics of Wu's style may not be at first evident in them, yet the processional movement and sweeping grandeur of the two Taoist frescoes, and the impressive reposeful dignity of the Buddhist fresco, are entirely in line with the traditional Wu style (*Fig. 17*).

It is not known how or when Wu Tao-tzu died. The Taoists have annexed him as one of their divinities and believe that he disappeared into one of his own pictures. The story, which is given in the *Shu hua fang* of the seventeenth century and is obviously apocryphal, is as follows:

> In the palace of Ming Huang (713-756), the walls were of great size, and upon one of these the Emperor ordered Wu Tao-tzu to paint a landscape. The artist prepared his materials, and concealing the wall with curtains commenced his work. After a little while he drew aside the veil, and there lay a glorious scene, with mountains, forests, clouds, men, birds, and all things as in nature. While the Emperor gazed upon it with admiration, Wu Tao-tzu, pointing to a certain part of the picture, said, "Behold this temple grotto at the foot of the mountain—within it dwells a spirit." Then clapping his hands, the gate of the cave suddenly opened. "The interior is beautiful beyond conception," continued the artist; "permit me to show the way, that your Majesty may behold the marvels it contains." He passed within, turning round to beckon his patron to follow, but in a moment the gateway closed, and before the amazed monarch could advance a step, the whole scene faded away, leaving the white wall as before the contact of the painter's brush. And Wu Tao-tzu was never seen again [*H. A. Giles; ibid.*].

Works of reference on Wu Tao-tzu:

1. Chinese on the Art of Painting; O. Sirén, Peiping, 1936.
2. Chinese Pictorial Art; H. A. Giles, London, 1918.
3. An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting; A. Waley, London, 1923.
4. The Eumorfopoulos Collection of Chinese Frescoes; L. Binyon, London, 1927.



此圖は天神地祇を畫がいたもの、衣服の描法は極めて流暢で、而も古厚の趣があり、その作風は呉道子に淵源し、唐の元和の年號ある普照寺の畫像と酷だ相似たる所がある。

FIGURE 17

Sung Painting of T'ien Huang, Hou T'u, and Huang Ti.

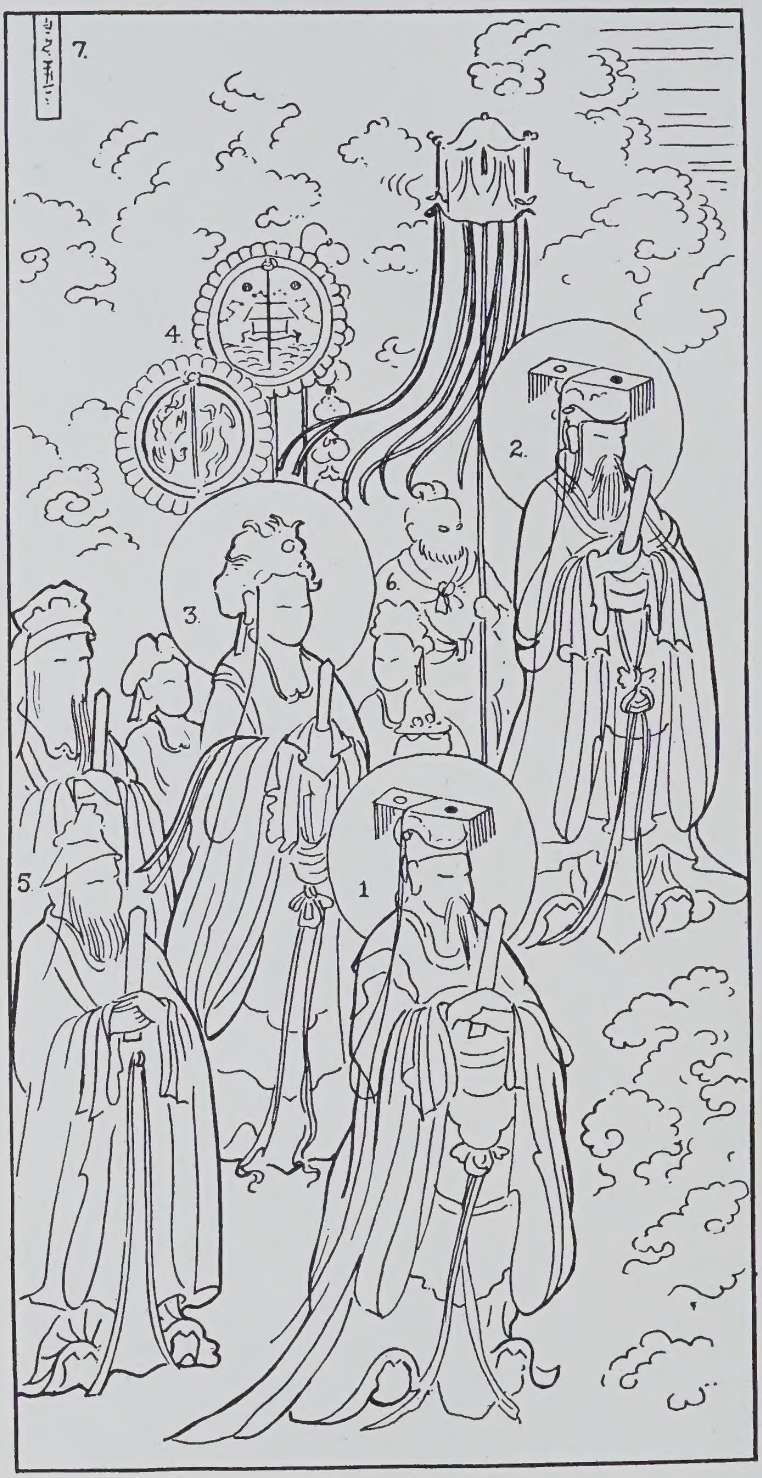


FIGURE 18

Key to Sung Painting of the Three Rulers. (Fig. 17.)

SUNG PAINTING OF THE THREE RULERS

This painting by an unknown artist is accepted in Japan as of the Sung period (*Pageant of Chinese Painting; Otsuka Kogeisha, Tokyo, 1936*), but no year date is suggested. The cartouche in the upper left-hand corner gives the names of the Three Rulers as T'ien Huang, Huang Ti, and Hou T'u. The latter is wearing the robes of an Empress, and behind her are two banners, one is the Empress's banner with the phoenix emblems (*cp. Fig. 43;* XII: *23*), and on the other is depicted a sea, an island with a palace on it, the sun (*jih*) and moon (*yüeh*) in the sky, as well as star groups, including the Northern and Southern Dippers (*cp. Fig. 56;* XIII: *13*). The other two rulers are wearing royal robes, with mortar-board caps on which are depicted sun and moon, and which are adorned with fringes of gems (*cp. Fig. 54;* XIII: *11*, *12*). At least two of the rulers wear the barrel-shaped ear-protectors with long cords, and they all carry the tablet. Their robes are identical with those of regal figures of the two Taoist frescoes. They are accompanied by two officials, at least two damsel attendants, and by a fierce-looking Tantra warrior carrying a ceremonial umbrella-banner. The background is dark sky with floating clouds.

Explanation of the Key

1. T'ien Huang—the Emperor of Heaven.
2. Huang Ti—the Yellow Emperor.
3. Hou T'u—the Empress of Earth, with two damsel attendants.
4. The Two Banners of Hou T'u.
5. The Two Civil Officials.
6. Tantra Warrior, bearing Ceremonial Banner.
7. Cartouche giving Caption of the Painting.

IX

BUDDHIST PARADISES

MOST of the frescoes of Buddhist temples are in the character known as Mandalas or Paradises or Heavens, and in general they are groupings of celestial figures, sometimes represented as an assemblage or in procession, but more specifically they are the artistically important compositions in which a Buddha is the central figure of an imposing array of heavenly personages and attendants. They may be compositions of a purely mythological nature, but also there may be woven into the picture groups of an historical nature. The central figure of the Toronto fresco is Buddha Maitreya, the Coming Buddha, so the fresco is called a Paradise of Maitreya (*cp. Serindia; p. 1408*). He is accompanied by Bodhisattvas and attendants, but at each end of the fresco are depicted historical incidents of Buddhistic significance (*chap.* XII). The Kansas City fresco is a Paradise of Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Buddha of Medicine, because he is the central figure, and he is flanked by the Bodhisattvas Candraprabha and Sūryaprabha, and surrounded by a great array of associates and attendants (*cp. Serindia; p. 1409*). The Philadelphia fresco is a Paradise of Sakyamuni, who is flanked by the Bodhisattvas Kāśyapa and Ananda (*Museum Journal; Fernald, Philadelphia, June 1928*) and attended by a large retinue (*cp. Serindia; p. 1410*). There are also Paradises of Amitabha, of Avalokiteśvara, of Kṣitigarbha, and others of lesser significance.

It is evident that the idea of these large compositions originated in India, but their use in China goes back to the early years of Chinese Buddhism, and from the beginning they seem to have lost much of their Indian character and to have taken on a Chinese quality. A Chinese traveller, Sung Yün, in A.D. 519 made a pilgrimage to a famous Buddhist temple east of Khotan, and in his record he reports that he saw there hanging in the temples tens of thousands of embroidered banners and hangings, more than half of them being banners of the Wei state. He noted that among those bearing Chinese inscriptions were many year dates, such as A.D. 495, 501, and 513; but there was only one banner which upon examination of its date proved to be of the period of the Yao Ch'in (A.D. 384-417) (*Serindia; p. 841*).

Banners such as these seem always to have been associated with temple frescoes, certainly up to and including the T'ang period, which the discoveries at Tun-huang have so clearly demonstrated. The banners being small objects were accumulated in great numbers, and according to Sir Aurel Stein were probably intended to be hung on the pillars and rafters of corridors and passages, for the walls would already be occupied with the frescoes (*Serindia; pp. 842-847*). But their subject-matter was that of the frescoes, though their use was more of an individual and personal nature than the frescoes, for which reason cartouches for names of the donors and other inscriptions were provided on many of the banners. The inscriptions on the banners obtained by Sir Aurel Stein at Tun-huang, are all in Chinese and of a votive character, and show dates ranging between A.D. 864 and 983, which of course would be the approximate dating of the frescoes of that place.

The votive inscriptions of the banners give much information about the motives from which they were offered. Among them were pious wishes for the spiritual benefit of dead relatives, as well as prayers for the health and prosperity of the donors and their families. Side by side with Buddhistic ideas the inscriptions often also express hopes and notions which were peculiar to Chinese traditional thought, or were Taoist in character, which clearly reflects the beginning of the process which ultimately produced the strange medley of popular worship and superstition which has obtained in modern China.

The frescoes on the other hand, though they sometimes bear donor pictures, and are usually devoid of inscriptions, seldom if ever carry dates, or even the names of donors; but such are common on stone relievos. In the courtyard of the Hsing Hua Monastery was an inscription stating that land was given by the two monks An and Ning as payment for the painting of the fresco (*chap.* VI), which suggests that the painting of frescoes for the temples may oftentimes be due to initiative on the part of the monks themselves, in contrast to the banners which would be votive offerings of the worshippers. From this it may be inferred that apart from votive offerings, another motive for the painting of frescoes may be to beautify the sanctuary and to provide a suitable religious background for the deities set out before them.

It should be noted that the fresco Paradises have their early parallels in stone relievos, such as those of Yün-kang in northern Shansi, and Lung-mên in the Lo-yang area. Their similarity has been dealt with by R. Petrucci in his article on the Mandalas in Appendix E of *Serindia*, pp. 1400-1428.

The fresco Paradises seem to aim at a balanced esoteric grouping and to conform to a rigid symmetry, with emphasis on a central figure who is flanked by lesser deities, and accompanied by retinues of attendants; while side-scenes of an historical nature tend to bring the conception behind the picture into the realm of reality and the popular.

Strictly speaking, the name Mandala or Paradise may only be applied to those representations of divinities which are based on the esoteric rules which govern such paintings. It should contain no natural features, such as landscapes, architecture, animals, or plants, except those mentioned in the rules, which include flowers for decoration or offerings, objects of symbolism or ceremonial, or furniture for the group setting, and the clouds and blue sky of heaven. The Chinese term for these Paradises is *pien-hsiang*, but, as Mr. Langdon Warner points out (*Buddhist Wall-Paintings; 1938, pp. 16-17*), that expression includes a wider range of subject-matter and style than would be allowed by the limitations of the word Mandala.

In the delineation of representations of Buddha and associated divinities, it must be understood that the artists and the worshippers did not limit their conception of these divinities to the mere outward form as depicted; in and over all there was a mystical Something, yet nevertheless real, which could not be expressed in concrete form. Sir Charles Eliot sums up the Buddhist's conception as follows:

> A Buddha has three bodies or forms of existence. The first is the Dharmakāya, which is the essence of all Buddhas. It is true knowledge or Bodhi . . . the one permanent reality underlying all phenomena and all individuals. The second is the Sambhoga-kāya or body of enjoyment, that is to say the radiant and super-human form in which Buddhas appear in their paradises or when otherwise manifesting themselves in celestial splendour. The third is the Nirmāna-kāya, or the body of transformation, that is to say the human form worn by Sākyamuni or any other Buddha and regarded as a transformation of his true nature and almost a distortion, because it is so partial and inadequate an expression of it [*Hinduism and Buddhism; Sir Charles Eliot, London, 1921;* II: *32-33; quoted by L. Warner, p. 17*].

In the light of this analysis the first body must be ruled out of the fresco portrayals, the second may be evident in a limited manner by the corporative grandeur and size of the important figures, and the attempt by colour and decorations to convey celestial glory and splendour, while the third is the dominant conception expressed in the Paradise scenes. Nevertheless the supra-mundane character of the divinities is expressed by symbols and haloes and attitudes. The figures of divinities usually are all distinguished by head aureoles or haloes, and the more important figures are also provided with body aureoles. Sometimes they are transparent, in which case the imposition and overlapping of two or more aureoles give a sense of depth which is very effective. According to Shên Kua, a writer of the eleventh century, it is contrary to the canons to draw Buddha's aureole anything but correctly symmetrical. He says: "When painters paint Buddha's aureole, they make it flat and round like a fan. If his body is deflected, then the aureole is also deflected,—a serious blunder. Such a one is only thinking of Buddha as a graven image, and does not know that the roundness of his aureole is everlasting. In like manner, when Buddha is represented as walking, his aureole is made to tail out behind him, and this is called the wind-borne aureole,—also a serious blunder. For Buddha's aureole is a divine aureole which even a universe-wrecking hurricane could not move, still less could our light breezes flutter it" (*Chinese Pictorial Art; H. A. Giles, London, 1918, p. 51*).

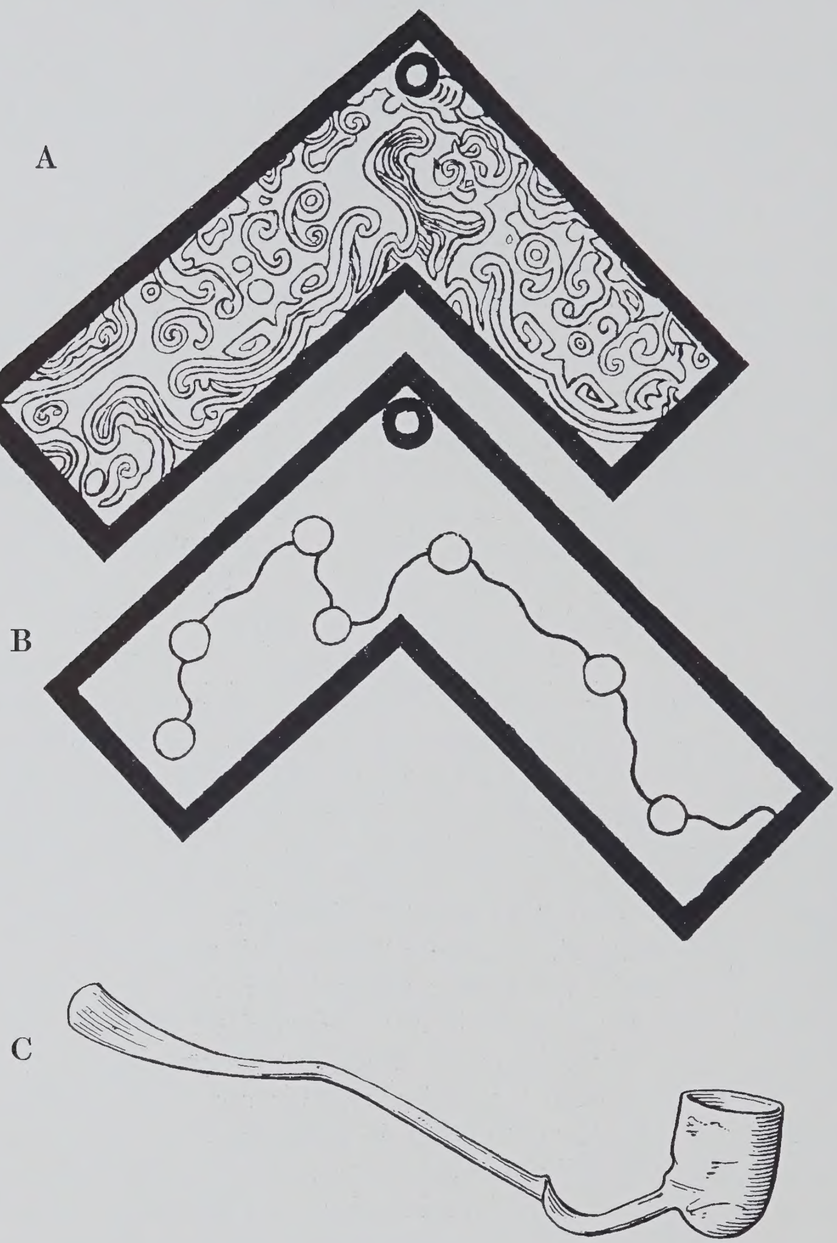


FIGURE 19

Ink-squeeze of Bronze Dipper Symbol.

A. Obverse. B. Reverse—showing Northern Dipper (Chin Shih So).

C. Line Drawing of Ancient Bronze Wine-dipper. Royal Ontario Museum.

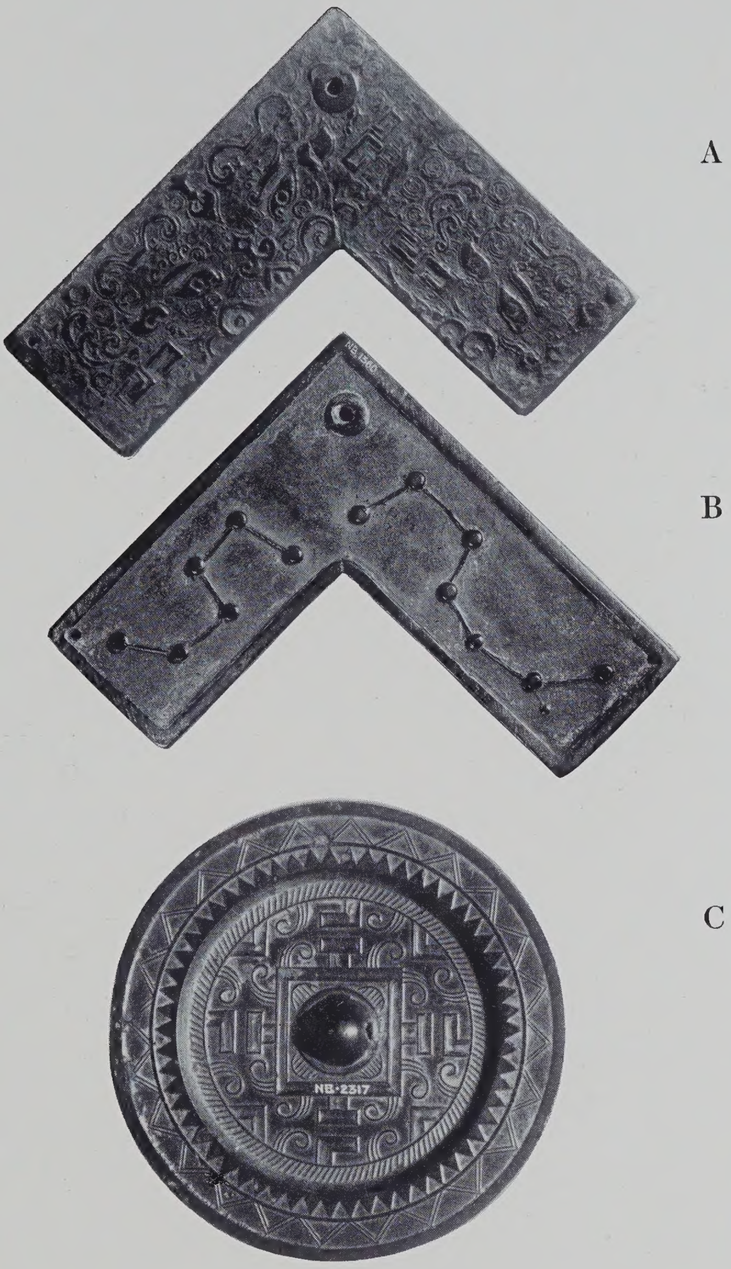


FIGURE 20

Ancient Bronze Dipper Symbol.

A. Obverse. B. Reverse—showing the Two Dippers. Royal Ontario Museum.

C. Ancient Bronze Mirror, showing Sun-dial and Cloud Markings.

X

STELLAR DEITIES

IN the *Chin-shih-so* of the brothers Feng, a Chinese archaeological work first published in 1822, is an illustration of a bronze object shaped like a stone-mason's square (*Fig. 19*). It is known as a *ch'ing*, and is a musical instrument. It is pierced at the angle-point for suspension, and is beaten as a gong. This instrument originated in the ancient stone and possibly jade *ch'ings* of some three thousand years ago. Down through the centuries it has been used, with slight variations in form, in the official ceremonies and sacrifices. Even today, in some Confucian temples, the stand of sixteen metal *ch'ings* may be found in the main courtyard, though the ancient Confucian ceremonies have been abolished and the temples mostly denuded of ritual equipment, since the Republic of China came into being. Its form had become an emblem of felicitation, and *ch'ing*-shaped objects were used as amulets of good luck. The *ch'ing* of the *Chin-shih-so* was doubtless of the amulet class, not necessarily to be worn on the person except on occasion, but possibly to be hung up over the door or somewhere in the house, just as Westerners might hang up a horseshoe. This *ch'ing* had a monster-mask design on one side (*Fig. 19A*), which for convenience may be called the obverse, and on the other side (*Fig. 19B*), the reverse, was a group of stars which represented the Northern Dipper, which we know as the Ursa Major or Great Bear (*Fig. 27*). The monster-mask design is of an ancient style characteristic of Shang Dynasty II (*c.* 1400-1122 B.C.), and usually taken to be symbolic of the forces of nature. Certain small differences in the design of this particular *ch'ing* point to its being a reproduction of a later period, probably the Sung Dynasty (A.D. 960-1280), though the *Chin-shih-so* speaks of the object as somewhat earlier.

If this were an isolated example of a *ch'ing* with a Dipper constellation design, it might be considered an interesting fact, but when a similar object comes to light, almost identical with that of the *Chin-shih-so* except that it bears the designs of two Dipper groups, and also apparently belonging to the Sung period, then added significance is given to the object, and it must be assumed that during the Sung period the conception of the influence of the Dippers must have been common. This second *ch'ing* with the two Dippers is in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum (*Fig. 20*). The Dippers are depicted one on each arm of the bronze object, one being the Northern Dipper with its seven stars and the small star near the end of the handle, and the other being the Southern Dipper, which is formed by six stars of the constellation Sagittarius, the Archer (*Figs. 20B, and 27*) (*Uranographie Chinoise; G. Schlegel, Leyden, 1875*).

The two Dippers are, of course, visible to persons in the latitude of south Shansi in the Northern Hemisphere, that of the Northern Dipper (*Pei-tou*) in relation to the Pole Star, and that of the Southern Dipper (*Nan-tou*) on the southern horizon across a very bright arm of the Milky Way, for which reason doubtless it is spoken of in Western circles as the Milk Dipper. At first sight it might appear strange that the Chinese should call it the Southern Dipper, but not when it is remembered that to Chinese in the Northern Hemisphere, the extreme south as they knew it would be the southern horizon. It is obviously a good luck symbol of astrological import, the physical aspects being depicted by the two star groups, and the spiritual by the monster-mask design, suggestive of the forces of nature; while the historical background of the *ch'ing* itself is rich with centuries of ritualistic use and meaning.

In addition to this, the L-shaped form of the *ch'ing* may also be related to another astronomical body, that is the sun, for an ancient Chinese sun-dial of probably the third century B.C., now in the Toronto Museum (*Fig. 21A*), contains on its surface among various geometrical lines four L-shaped outlines which were later included in the designs of certain bronze mirrors (*Figs. 20C; 21B*). These mirrors were formerly known to Westerners as T L V mirrors, but with these geometrical emblems now known to have come from ancient Chinese sun-dials, they are beginning to be known as "sun-dial" mirrors (*An Ancient Chinese Sun-dial;*

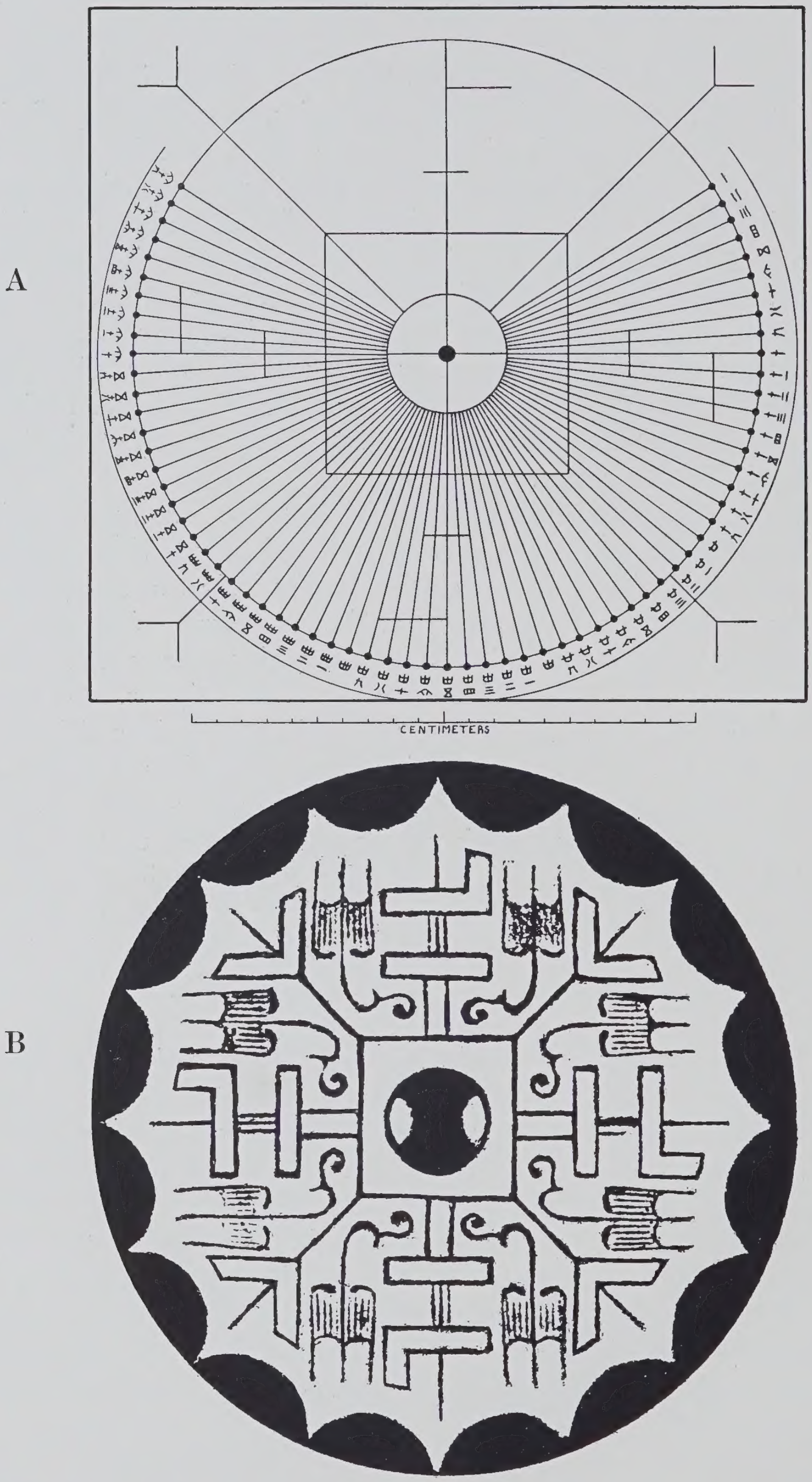

A
CENTIMETERS
B

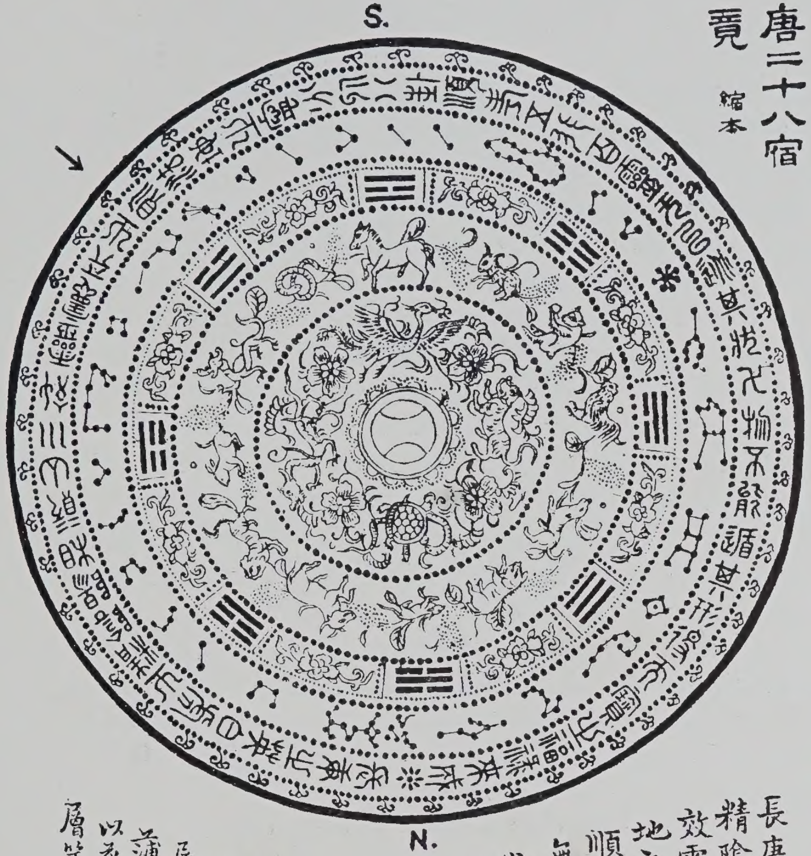
FIGURE 21

A. Diagram from Stone Sun-dial: Third Century B.C. Royal Ontario Museum.

B. Ink-squeeze of Ancient Sun-dial Mirror: First Century B.C.

唐二十八宿竟

縮本



A

長庚之英白虎之精陰陽相資山川效靈憲天之則法地之寧分列八卦順考五行百靈無以逃其狀萬物不能遁其形得而寶之福禄来成

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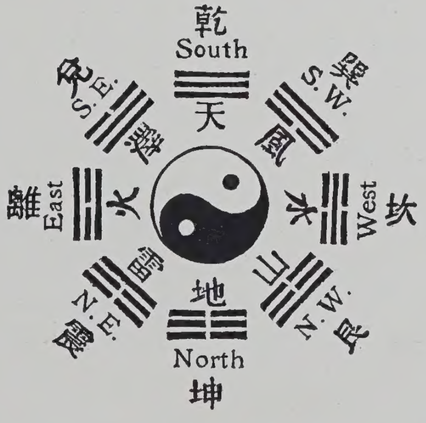
乾
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火
兌
S.E.
澤

B

FIGURE 22

A. Ink-squeeze of Ancient Bronze Mirror showing the Twenty-eight Constellations.

B. Diagram of T'ai-chi and Pa-kua Emblems.

W. C. White and P. M. Millman, Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, November 1938. The Cull Bronzes; W. P. Yetts, London, 1939, pp. 116-165).

The Chinese word for Dipper or Ladle is *tou*, which in modern times is the name of a measure usually translated as a "peck." But the "cup" of an acorn is also a *tou*, and an acorn cup is very similar in form to an ancient wine ladle (*Fig. 19C*), and the form of this wine ladle with its undulating handle is strikingly like the plottings of the Dipper configurations, joined as the stars are to form bowl and handle. Moreover, this ancient ladle was used in an upright position with extended handle when ladling wine, but was inverted over the rim of the wine vessel when not in use, to allow the drip from the ladle to fall into the vessel, which had its representation in the inverted position of the Southern Dipper as seen from north temperate latitudes (*Fig. 27*).

The earliest reference in Chinese literature to the ancient wine ladle or dipper (*tou*) is found in the Odes.

> He fills their wine-cup with a large dipper (*tou*),
> And lifts a prayer for his aged guests,
>
> . . . .
>
> That their old age might be happy,
> With lustrous blessing ever swelling.
>
> *Ode 246: 4. Probably 8th century* B.C.

In the Odes also are found references to the Dipper as traced in the heavens, the same word (*tou*) being used.

> In the north there is the Dipper (*tou*),
> But it lades no wine or sauce;
>
> . . . .
>
> In the north there is the Dipper (*tou*),
> Pointing its handle towards the west.
>
> *Ode 203:7. Probably 8th century* B.C.

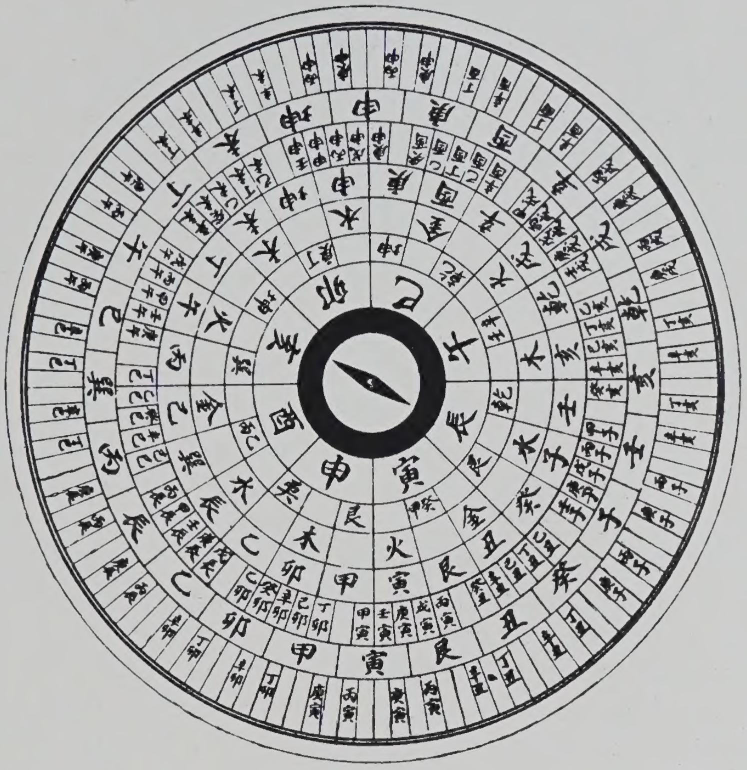
The philosopher Hô Kuan Tzu in the fourth or third century B.C. gives a clear statement of the method of determining the seasons by the direction in which the tail or "handle" of the Great Bear Dipper was pointing. He says: "When the handle of the Dipper points to the east (at nightfall), it is spring to all the world. When the handle of the Dipper points to the south, it is summer to all the world. When the handle of the Dipper points to the west, it is autumn to all the world. When the handle of the Dipper points to the north, it is winter to all the world." It is known that in ancient times the body of the Dipper was considerably nearer to the North Pole than it is now, and the handle appeared to move round the pole somewhat like the hand of a clock.

In the Êrh-ya, third century B.C., it is stated that "The Dipper is to be seen in the south, for which reason it is called the Southern Dipper" (*Tou chih nan fang chi chien, ku yün Nan-tou*). This Southern Dipper (*Nan-tou*) is included among the Twenty-eight Stellar Mansions or Stations, where it is called the *Tou-hsü* or Dipper Mansion (*Fig. 22A*).

The Northern Dipper (*Pei-tou*) is not included among the Mansions, since it is far from the path of the moon, and yet in popular regard it takes precedence over the Southern Dipper. One proverb says: "The Southern Dipper controls life, and the Northern Dipper controls death" (*Nan-tou chu shêng, Pei-tou chu ssu*), and another, "Gaze at the Stars, and worship the Dippers" (*Kuan Hsing, pai Tou*), so the most worshipped stars of the heavens are the Northern and Southern Dippers. In worshipping them, which is usually on birthdays or in case of illness, the people burn incense and place a peck-measure (*tou*) of rice before their tablet as an offering. They also light a lamp which is not allowed to go out for three days, which may have a connection with the Three Stars of the Northern Dipper. The Spirits of the Stars of the Northern Dipper record men's actions, both good and evil, and according to one's virtuous deeds, or his sins, they add to or cut off a portion of his life. The Three Kingdoms (*San Kuo*) gives an instance of this as follows: "*Chao I* was told by a fortune teller his life was to be very short, and that if he would protect himself he must go to a certain mountain and ask the men there what he should do. Upon reaching the mountain he found two old men playing chess. He placed wine and food before them, and then having reverently bowed, he waited for them to finish their game. When they had finished, he asked them to give him long life. This request they granted, and he was given one hundred years. These men were the Spirits of the Northern and Southern Dippers" (*Chinese Religion Seen through the Proverb; C. H. Plopper, Shanghai, 1926, p. 41*).

Of the Northern Dipper the fourth, fifth, and sixth stars, numbered from the star nearest Polaris, are called the Three T'ai, and each has its function; the fourth governs long life, the fifth governs happiness, and the sixth governs a man's income, so that the proverb "The Three Stars shining together" expresses the wish that one may enjoy Happiness, Plenty, and Longevity (*Fu, Lu, Shou*). Of these Longevity is the most popular with the people. He is represented as having a large, high forehead. He is always smiling,—and carries a peach in one hand and a staff in the other. There is usually a bat (*fu*) flying above his head, its name being a synonym for happiness (*fu*), and a deer (*lu*) standing nearby to suggest plenty (*lu*). Besides this Star of Longevity, there is an Old Man Star (*Lao Jên Hsing*) who is said to be the Star of the South Pole, and from whom also long life is sought. The Polar Star is said to be the home of the "Goddess of the North Star," whose sons are the Northern and Southern Dippers. Among the stellar deities the Sun and the Moon occupy a prominent place, and these in conjunction with the Five Planets form the Seven Luminaries (*Ch'i Yao*) or the Seven Directors, or Rulers of the Times and Seasons (*Ch'i Chêng*).

The Five Planets are closely interwoven with every aspect of life. The Five Planets—Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury and Saturn—represent the Five Elements (wood, fire, metal, water, and earth), the Five Regions (east, south, west, north, and centre), the Five Colours (green, red, white, black, and yellow), and many other groupings (*Fig. 23A and B*). The very involved ancient systems of Chinese philosophy and divination, based upon the Great Extreme (*T'ai-chi*) and the Eight Diagrams (*Pa-kua*), are connected with these planets (*Fig. 22B*); and, in Taoistic practices, the Taoist geomancer's compass-dial (*Fig. 23A*), with its planetary regions, its cycle of Stems and Branches, plays a very important part in what is known as "wind and water" (*fêng shui*) geomancy. With this dial, guidance is sought in deciding questions relating to betrothal, marriage, burial, locations



Ten Heavenly Stems

Jupiter.	1.	*Chia*	甲	Wood
	2.	*Yi*	乙	
Mars.	3.	*Ping*	丙	Fire
	4.	*Ting*	丁	
Saturn.	5.	*Wu*	戊	Earth
	6.	*Chi*	己	
Venus.	7.	*Keng*	庚	Metal
	8.	*Hsin*	辛	
Mercury.	9.	*Jen*	壬	Water
	10.	*Kuei*	癸	

Twelve Earthly Branches

1.	*Tzŭ*	子.	Rat
2.	*Ch'ou*	丑.	Ox
3.	*Yin*	寅.	Tiger
4.	*Mao*	卯.	Hare
5.	*Ch'en*	辰	Dragon
6.	*Ssŭ*	己.	Serpent
7.	*Wu*	午.	Horse
8.	*Wei*	未.	Goat
9.	*Shen*	申.	Monkey
10.	*Yu*	酉.	Cock
11.	*Hsü*	戌.	Dog
12.	*Hai*	亥.	Pig

FIGURE 23

A. Diagram of Taoist's Compass-dial.

B. Table of Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches.

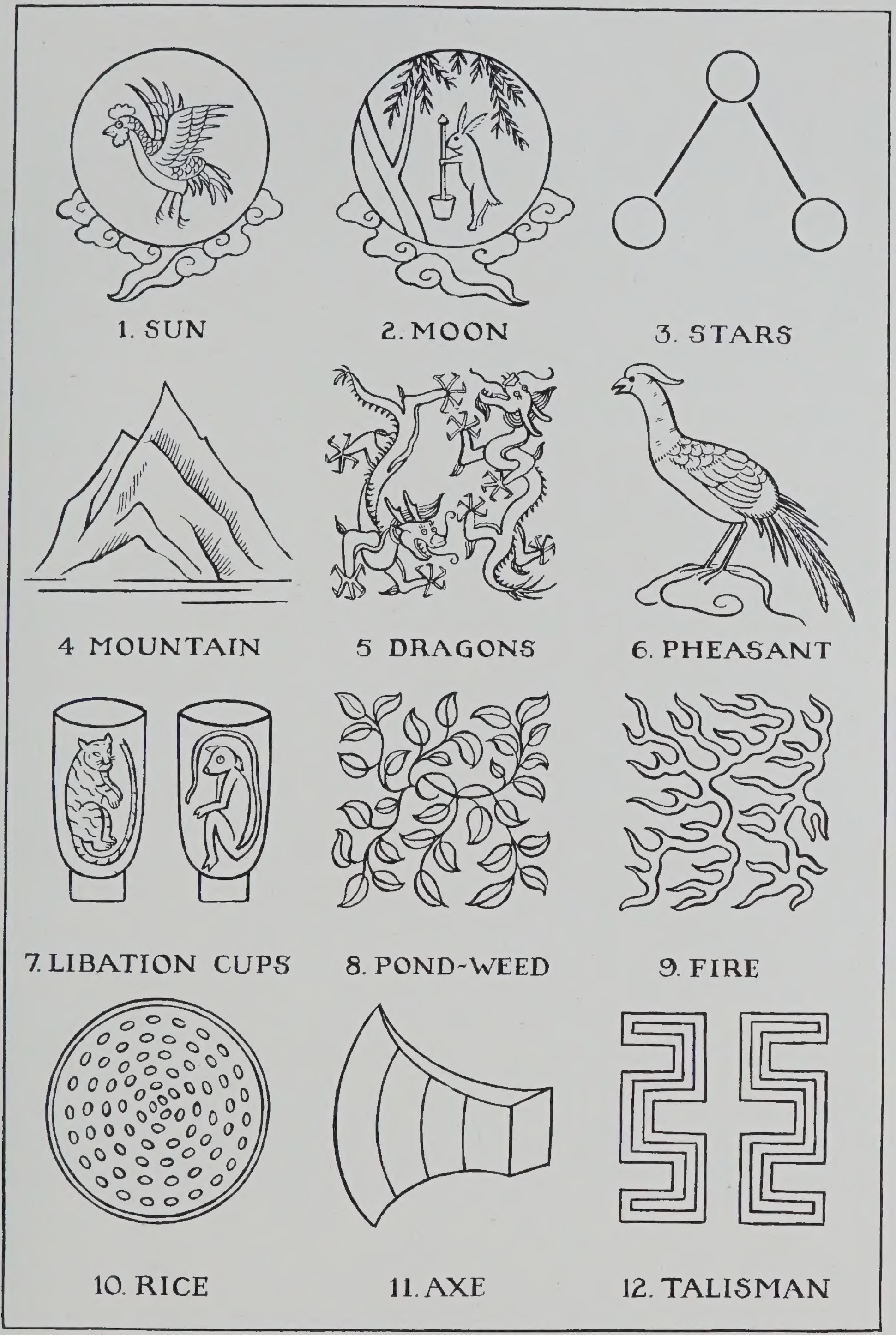
for tombs, or wells, or buildings, and an endless number of matters concerning the life of the people. A fragment of a geomancer's dial, with the plotting of the Northern Dipper star group clearly depicted in its centre, was found in a first century (A.D.) tomb in Korea (*Tomb of the Painted Basket; Hamada, Chosen-Koseki-Kenkyu-Kwai, Seoul, 1934*).

The Nine Heavens (*Chiu T'ien*), or the Nine Mansions (*Chiu Kung*) are divisions of the Celestial Sphere, and are associated with the immediate followers of the Lord of the Southern Dipper (*chap.* XIV). The Ten Heavenly Stems (*Shih T'ien Kan*), together with the Twelve Earthly Branches (*Shih Erh Ti Chih*), form a cycle of sixty combinations (*Fig. 23*) which have been used for some three thousand years in the designation of successive years, a "cycle of Cathay" being sixty years. The Ten Stems are symbolized in the Northern Dipper fresco (*chap.* XIII), and the Twelve Branches as the twelve animals of the years, are symbolized in the Southern Dipper fresco (*chap.* XIV). The Twelve Branches are used as names for the twelve horary periods of the day, two hours for each of the twelve; and for the twelve points of the Chinese compass.

Among the stellar deities are the Twenty-eight Stations (*Êrh-shih-pa Hsü*) or Stellar Mansions (*Kung*), which also have their place in geomancy, and are frequently found on mirrors in one form or another (*Fig. 22A*). The Southern Dipper is known as the Dipper Station (*Tou Hsü*).

Usually, in Taoist pictures of astrological or mythological significance, among the smaller stellar deities are to be found larger deities of outstanding importance, such as the Empress of Earth, the Emperor of Heaven, and the Yellow Emperor (*chap.* XIII), wearing imperial robes embroidered with the Twelve Ornaments (*Fig. 24*); or the Empress of Heaven and the Jade Emperor (*chap.* XIV; *cp. Fig. 17*). A very full and scholarly investigation of this involved subject of Chinese asterisms is set forth by Dr. W. Perceval Yetts in *The Cull Chinese Bronzes*, London, 1939, no. 28, pp. 116-165.

Although the name of the philosopher Lao Tzu is associated with Taoism as its Founder, the basic ideas and superstitious



1. SUN
2. MOON
3. STARS
4 MOUNTAIN
5 DRAGONS
6. PHEASANT
7. LIBATION CUPS
8. POND-WEED
9. FIRE
10. RICE
11. AXE
12. TALISMAN

THE TWELVE ORNAMENTS

FIGURE 24

practices of the system were in existence long before the sixth century B.C., which was the time of Lao Tzu, and the early theories of metaphysics and alchemy, aesthetics and astrology, medicine and geomancy are all based on correspondences of the Five Elements and the Five Planets in combination with the Eight Diagrams.

It is evident that the Chinese from earliest days have held the conviction that the "stars in their courses" greatly influence the life of men, and naturally these beliefs have manifested themselves in tradition, folklore, religious practices, and painting. Stellar deities played an important part in the religious life of the people, and to humanize these deities and render them more real and intimate to men, these starry bodies were personified, and made to occupy an important place in their pantheon of mythical and legendary deities. Because the movement of the planets and the change of position of the heavenly bodies were seasonal, so the question of time as measured by the cyclical system of the Stems and the Branches, became of very great importance in the regulation of affairs of human life and conduct.

This is the explanation that lies behind the composition and interpretation of the two Taoist frescoes, for Taoism, much more than Confucianism and even Buddhism, brought together a mass of superstitions and myths, so that it became in practice a popular system of geomancy, which almost eclipsed its more fundamental philosophy of the Way.

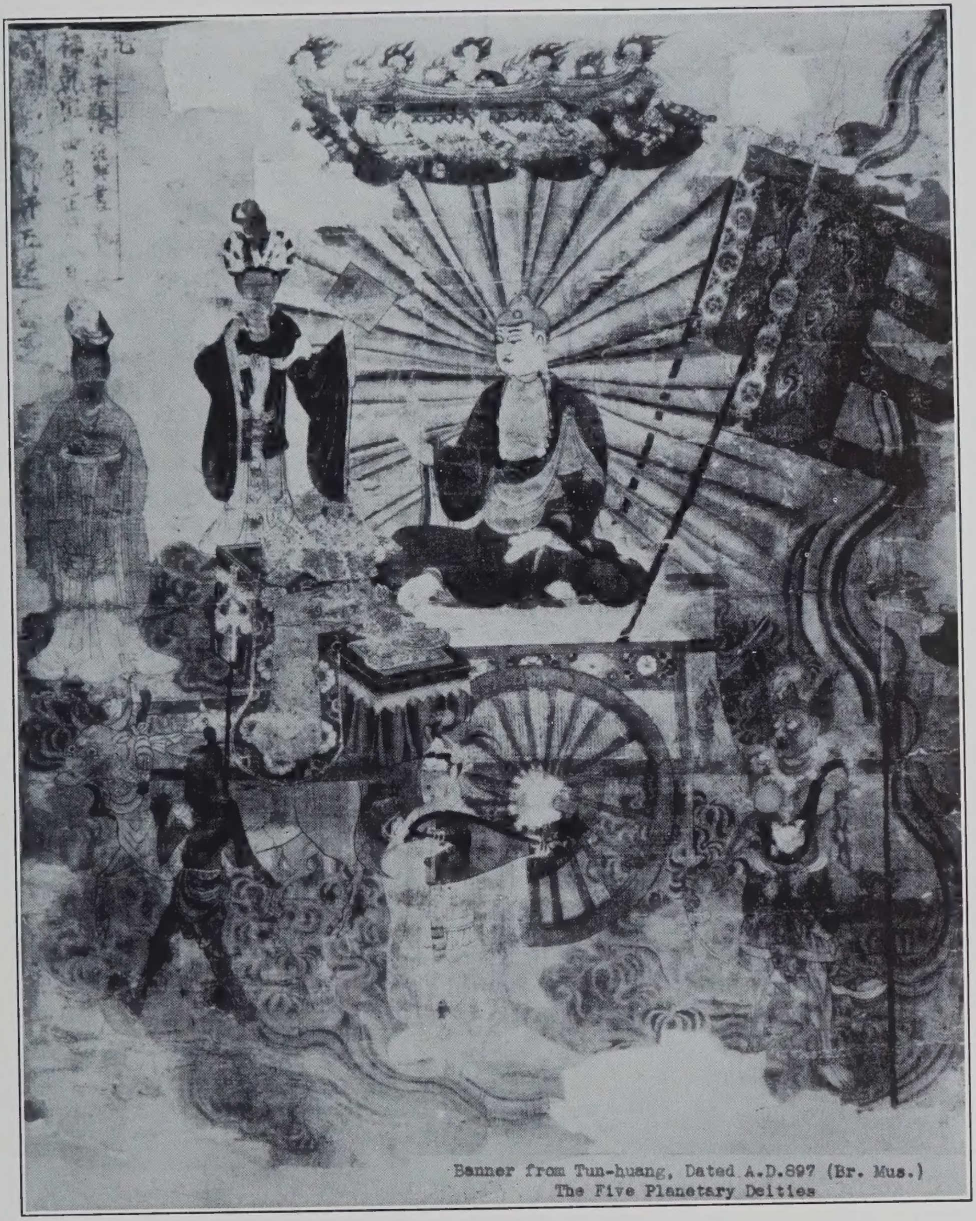

Banner from Tun-huang, Dated A.D.897 (Br. Mus.)
The Five Planetary Deities

FIGURE 25

Banner from Tun-huang. Now in the British Museum.
Buddha and the Five Planetary Deities. Date A.D. 897.

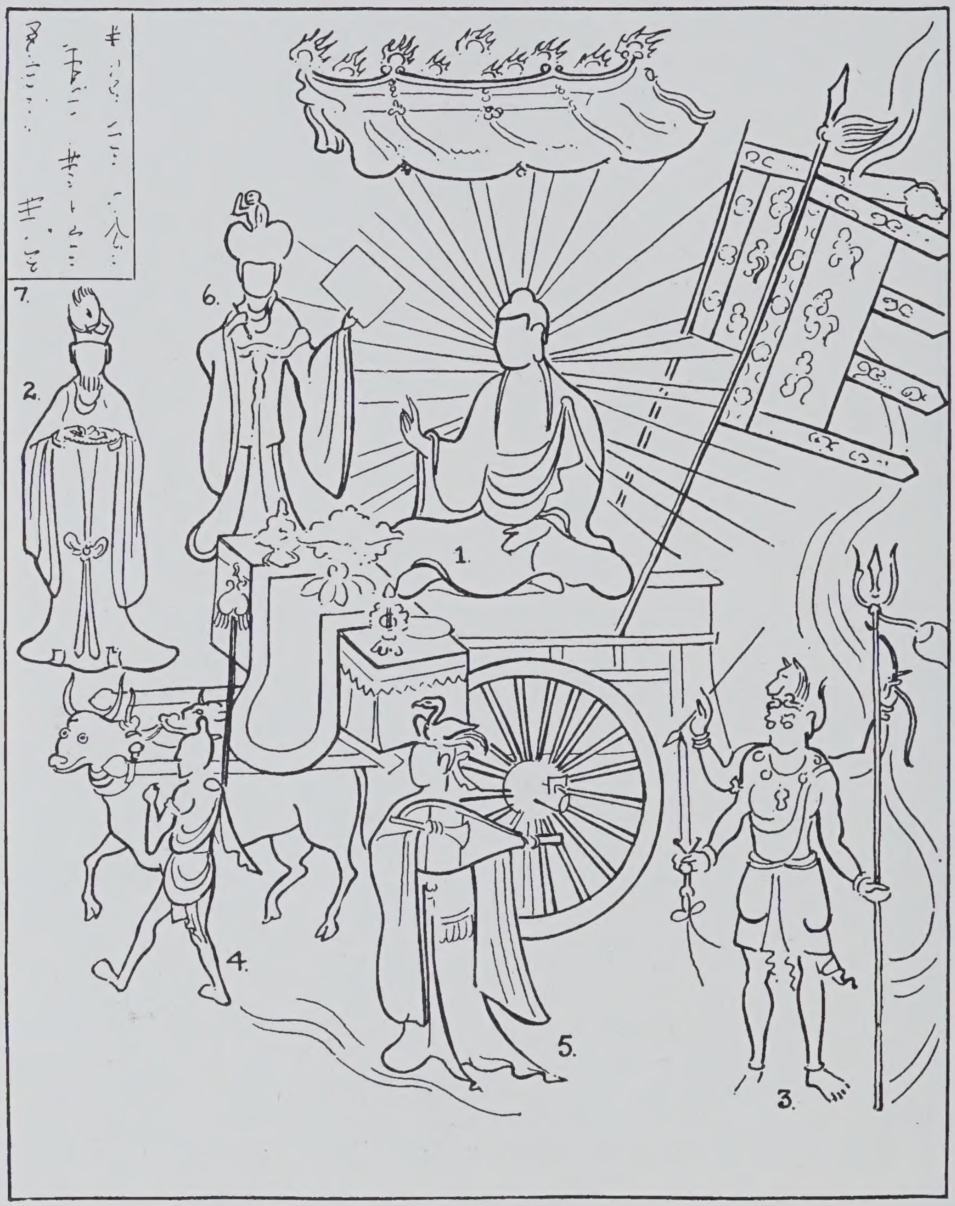


FIGURE 26

Key to the Banner of the Five Planetary Deities.

THE BANNER OF THE FIVE PLANETARY DEITIES

This small polychrome painting on silk, a little over two feet in height, was obtained from Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein, and is now in the British Museum (*Serindia, Pl.* LXXI*; ch.* LIV*: 007, p. 1059*).

In a cartouche in the upper left-hand corner, is an inscription in Chinese, which gives the date as the fourth year of the period Ch'ien Ning, which is A.D. 897, and states that the Buddha seated on the chariot is attended by the Five Planetary Deities.

EXPLANATION OF THE KEY

1. Buddha Tejahprabha, seated on a chariot drawn by an ox, with altar, banners, and canopy, and rays of blue, green, and crimson radiating from his person.

2. Jupiter. As a bearded official, bearing in his hands a platter of fruit, and with a boar's head depicted over his head-dress (*cp. chap.* XIII*: 21, Figs. 57 and 58*).

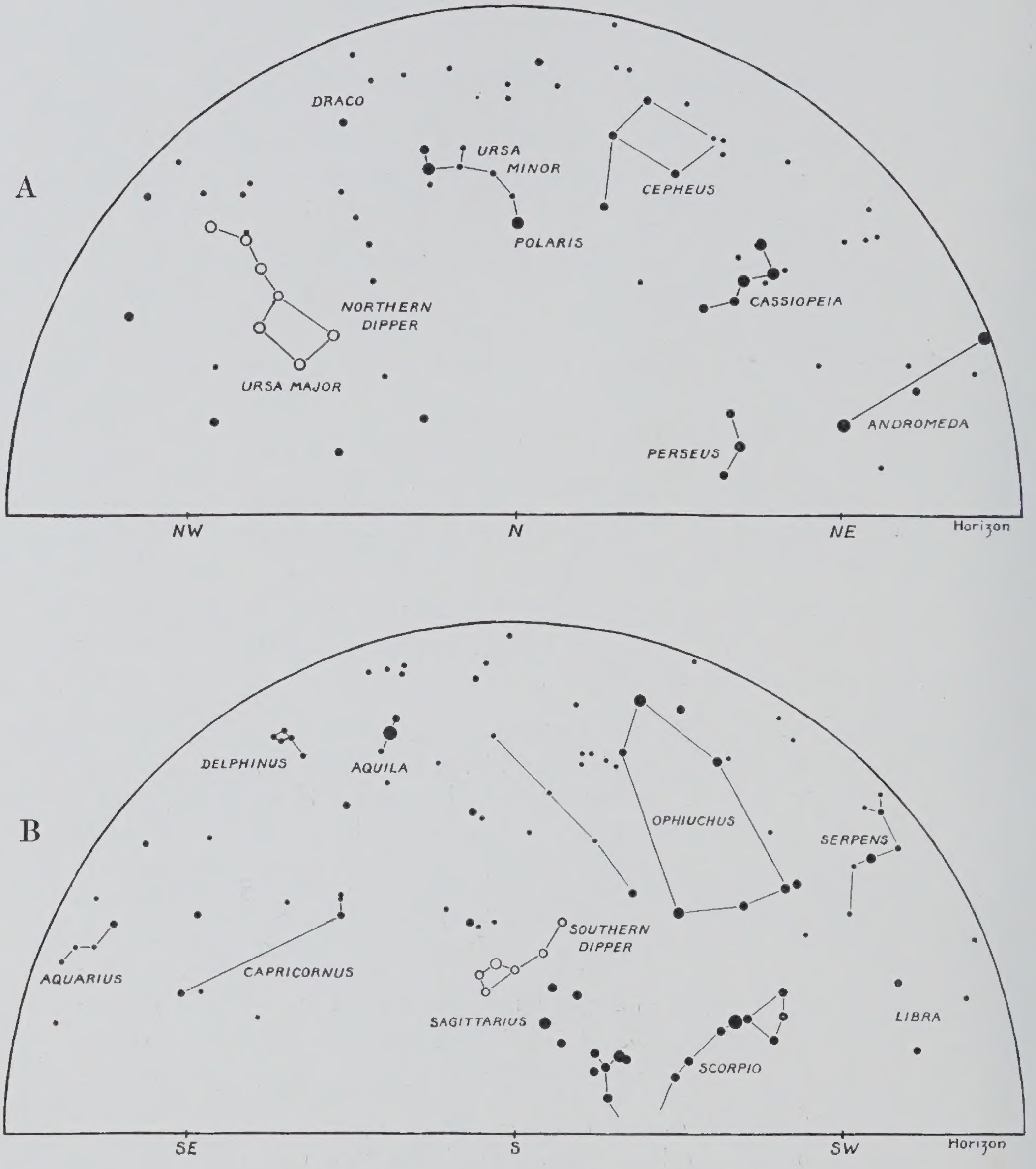
3. Mars. A demonic figure with fiery hair and grotesque features. He is four-armed, and carries in R. hand arrow and sword, and in L. hand a trident. Above his head is a small blue horse-head (*cp. chap.* XIII*: 22, Fig. 58*).

4. Saturn. In the guise of an Indian pilgrim, carrying a ringed staff, such as Ti-tsang carries, and with the outline of a small ox-head above and behind his hair-knob (*cp. chap.* XIII*: 23, Fig. 58*).

5. Venus. In female form, playing upon a large lute with a very long plectrum expanding at the striking end in shape of fan. A similar plectrum, 8 inches long and made of crimson ivory, is among the T'ang objects of the Shosoin collection (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, vol. I, Pl. 44*). Above the head-dress of this figure is the form of a phoenix or other bird (*cp. chap.* XIII*: 24, Fig. 58*).

6. Mercury. In female form, with right hand holding a writing brush, and left hand carrying a writing tablet. In the centre of the large head-dress is the figure of a monkey (*cp. chap.* XIII*: 25, Fig. 58*).

7. The cartouche, with caption and date, equivalent to A.D. 897.


A
DRACO
URSA MINOR
POLARIS
CEPHEUS
NORTHERN DIPPER
CASSIOPEIA
URSA MAJOR
ANDROMEDA
PERSEUS
NW
N
NE
Horizon
B
DELPHINUS
AQUILA
OPHIUCHUS
SERPENS
AQUARIUS
CAPRICORNUS
SOUTHERN DIPPER
SAGITTARIUS
LIBRA
SCORPIO
SE
S
SW
Horizon

Star Maps for Temperate Latitudes in the North Hemisphere, showing (A) the Northern Dipper and (B) the Southern Dipper.

A.-Northern Sky at 9 p.m. August 15th, 10 p.m. August 1st

B.-Southern Sky at 9 p.m. August 15th, 10 p.m. August 1st

FIGURE 27

XI

MAILED WARRIOR TYPES

IN the three frescoes there are seven warrior figures: two in the Buddhist fresco, the Guardians of the North and the South; three in the Taoist (I) fresco, the Lord of the Northern Dipper, his Tantric attendant, and Mars; and two in the Taoist (II) fresco, the Lord of the Southern Dipper, and his Tantric attendant. These may be divided into two groups, that of Mars and the two Tantric figures in one, and the other four warriors in the other group, but the general character of the figures and their armour is essentially the same in all.

The elaborate form of defensive armour represented in these warrior types, is generally accepted as of western origin, and as coming into China by way of Turkestan through Buddhist channels (*Chinese Clay Figures*, *pt.* I; *Laufer*, *pp. 300-301*). The discoveries of paintings of these warriors at Tun-huang, and the great numbers of T'ang clay figurines of Lokapalas, as well as carved stone relievos of such warrior figures (*Fig. 28*), show how prevalent in use, and how conventionalized in style and details, were these figures in the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907). Although this warrior type was reproduced in after years in paintings and frescoes and figures of deities—as for instance Kuan Ti, the God of War—the Chinese do not appear to have applied this type of armour to much if any practical use. The Japanese received these warrior types from China during the T'ang Dynasty, as may be seen in the objects of the Shosoin, or in Japanese iconography, but they also seem to have applied them in a practical manner, for the great quantities of Japanese defensive armour equipment in various collections show close parallels to that of the Chinese T'ang-period types.

As to the warriors of the frescoes, the three of Tantric form are of fierce aspect, with large rolling eyes, frowning eyebrows, grotesque noses, and snarling mouths (*chap.* XIII*: 2, 22; chap.* XIV*; 2*). The other four have human features and they are drawn with real dignity and seriousness (*chap.* XII*: 17 and 18; chap.* XIII*: 1; and chap.* XIV*: 1*).

The dress of all alike is an elaborate mixture of the warrior's and the king's, but the former predominates. The chief parts are the same, and consist of: (1) coat-of-mail or doublet; (2) corslet or breastplate; (3) mantle; (4) stole; (5) skirt or tunic of woven material; (6) leg-covering; (7) fore-arm guards; (8) greaves; (9) shoes or sandals; (10) helmet or tiara or bare-headed; (11) weapons and symbols (*cp. Serindia: General Note, p. 939*).

(1) The *coat-of-mail* may be of scale-armour (*chap.* XII*: 17; chap.* XIV*: 2*), or chain mail, or a doublet which, in parts, appears to be made of leathern thongs woven into a diaper design of three-armed stars (*chap.* XIII*: 1; chap.* XIV*: 1, Fig. 28*), or a garment of whole leather with decorative designs and plaques. It seems to be a sort of close-fitting shirt or tunic covering the body from the neck to the thighs and sometimes to the knees (*chap.* XIII*: 1*). It extends half way down the upper arm, the fore-arm being protected by arm-guards. At the bottom it is finished with a decorative border or frill, and also at the elbow it is generally finished by a frill. It is girt round the hips with a decorated belt, probably of leather with plaques of metal, rhinoceros-horn, lapis lazuli, or other semi-precious stones (*cp. English Catalogue of Shosoin; J. Harada, no. 414, no. 510, Tokyo, 1932); and under the breast by a second belt or twisted girdle of drapery (*chap.* XIV*: 1*). Sometimes an additional shaped-piece of plain leather (*chap.* XIV*: 1*) or of scale-armour (*chap.* XIV*: 2*), hangs as an apron in front from under the hip-belt and over the skirt of the tunic. Scales of the coat proper may be oblong, or round-edged, and overlapping downwards on the shoulders (*chap.* XIII*: 2, and chap.* XIV*: 2*) or the apron. Some of the mailed figures of paintings from Tun-huang show the scales overlapping upwards, as is seen sometimes in Japanese armour.

(2) The *breastplates* of at least five of these warriors seem not to be of the corslet form, but are simple breastplates, covering the upper part of breast and passing over the shoulders, like a wide collar or yoke (*chap.* XII*: 17*). Apparently they are of leather, highly decorated, and where not hidden by mantle or stole, appear to be studded with golden ornaments, or jewels, and in some cases with shoulder and upper-arm decoration of animal-masks and scales

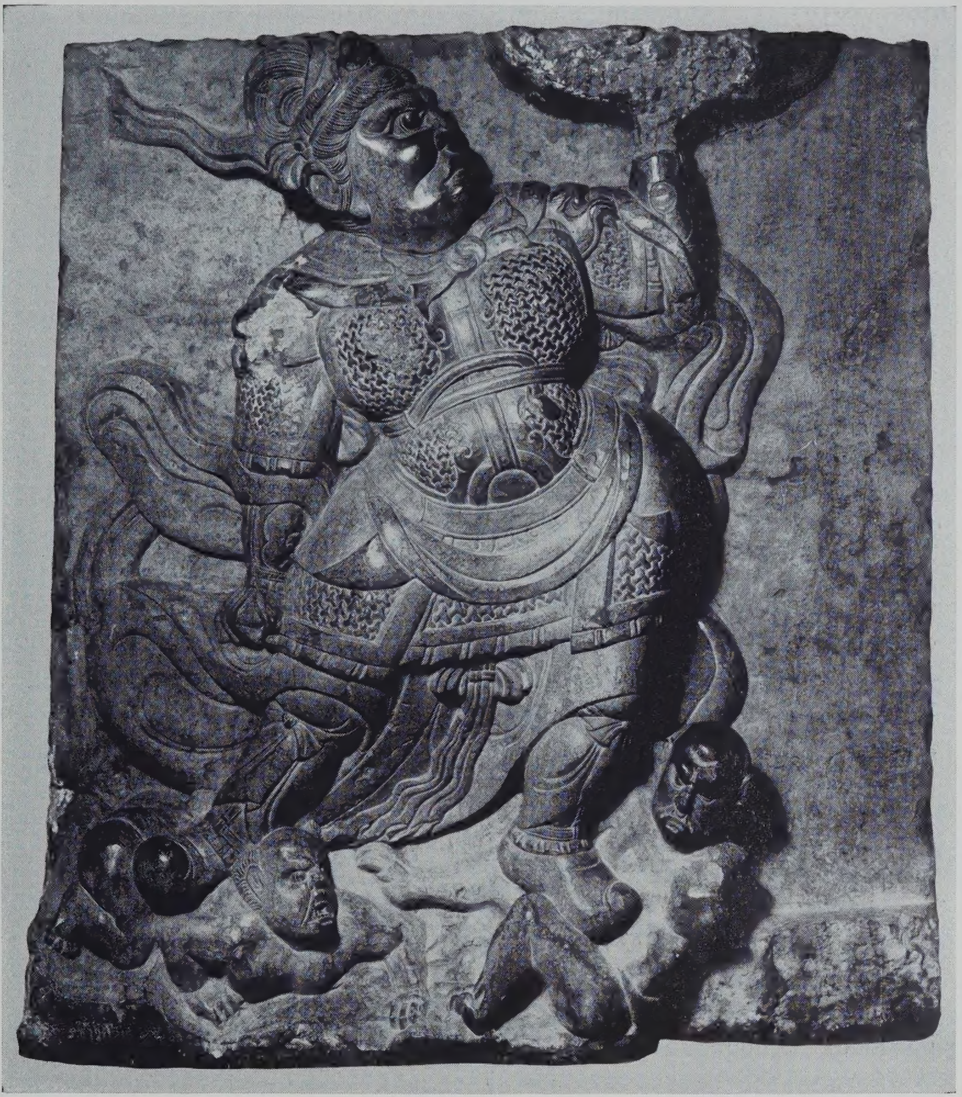


FIGURE 28

Stone Relievo of Mailed Guardian, trampling on Demons.
Height 30 inches. Probably T'ang. Royal Ontario Museum.

(*chap.* XIV*: 2*). Sometimes there is an upper belt round the breastplate from which hangs a monster-mask having the effect somewhat of a sporran (*chap.* XIII*: 2; chap.* XIV*: 2*).

(3) The *mantle* is of definitely Chinese style, and appears as dark drapery brought over the shoulders, crossed at the breast, and the left side brought over and fastened at the right, in kimona-style (*chap.* XIII*: 1 and 22; chap.* XIV*: 1*). Only three of the warriors appear not to carry a mantle.

(4) The *stole* is a long slender length of drapery which appears hanging round shoulders and twining about arms, sometimes knotted to the belt at hip and festooned across arms in front of the body. It is usually of different colours on the reverse side, and its treatment varies as in different classes of Bodhisattvas' stoles. With two possible exceptions (*chap.* XII*: 17 and 18*), all the warriors of the frescoes are equipped with stole.

(5) The *skirt* or *tunic*. In the four figures where the lower part of the dress is apparent this appears in the form of light-coloured drapery beneath the coat-of-mail, and is drawn up short of the knees in front, having the appearance of being the lower ends of loose trousers. This is typical of the costume of Dharmapalas and other active and warrior-type deities. From under the coat-of-mail at the elbows and sometimes at the neck (*chap.* XIV*: 1*), there appear also in most cases wide mouths of sleeves corresponding to the skirt in colour, and evidently part of the same garment.

(6) The *leg-coverings*. Beneath the tunic, when the knees are seen, leg-coverings of white drapery are generally found, either tucked into the greaves, or swathed round the leg and tied under the knee. Sometimes they are fastened with an ornamented garter-like clasp (*chap.* XIII*: 2*).

(7) and (8) *Arm-guards* and *greaves*. The forearm and lower leg are encased in tight-fitting guards. They are probably of stiff leather, like the corslets, and are ornamented with metal bands, and discs of differently coloured leathers, or with decorative bosses and jewels. Sometimes they carry scale-armour (*chap.* XIV*: 2*), and on one of the warriors (*chap.* XIII*: 1*) the arm-guards and greaves are armoured with shagreen, the knobs or protuberances of which are actually in relief and are graded from small to large

knobs as on the natural skin of the shark or dog-fish. In the Shosoin there are shagreen-covered hilts and scabbards (*Shosoin; Harada, Tokyo, no. 307*) which date to the eighth century; and it is known that in Japan shagreen was used for corslets (*Glossary of Arms and Armour; G. C. Stone, Southworth Press, 1934, pp. 537-538*). The greaves are finished at the bottom by ankle-protectors, probably of stiff canvas or leather, which are in the form of a ruff and extend like rays of pointed petals (*chap.* XIII*: 1 and 2; chap.* XIV*: 1 and 2*). The arm-guards are of corresponding pattern to the greaves, but without the protecting ruff.

(9) *Shoes* or *sandals.* Two of the figures are bare-footed (*chap.* XIII*: 1; chap.* XIV*: 1*). Only two others show a foot each (*chap.* XIII*: 2; chap.* XIV*: 2*) and these both wear an open shoe of sandal type, thin-soled, with heel-cap and toe-cap, and fastened over the instep with a clasp. The open space on the upper part of the foot shows the decorative lines of cloth or sock. Over the instep tie there is a protective shield decorated with a boss which is studded with a jewel.

(10) The *helmet* or *tiara.* Two of the warriors are bare-headed (*chap.* XIII*: 1; chap.* XIV*: 1*); two have flaring hair, from which tongues of flame leap forth (*chap.* XIII*: 2; chap.* XIV*: 2*), and these have a forehead decoration in the one case, and a monster decoration in the other; and a third, Mars the God of War, has flaring hair but without flames (*chap.* XIII*: 22*) with a tiara, in the centre of which is a stylized horse-head design (*chap.* XIII*: 22, cp. Fig. 26*). Of the other two, one has a large tiara of helmet character with side wings (*chap.* XII*: 17*), and the other has a peculiar-shaped white helmet (*chap.* XII*: 18*), which may definitely be accepted as made from the head of a pachyderm. This individual is Virūḍhaka, the Guardian of the South, who instead of the usual helmet wears the skin of a white elephant's head.

(11) *Weapons* and *symbols.* Straight-edged swords (*khadja*) are wielded by five of the warriors (*chap.* XIII*: 1, 2 and 22; chap.* XIV*: 1 and 2*); two carry halberds (*chap.* XII*: 17; chap.* XIII*: 2*), and one carries a bow and two arrows (*chap.* XIV*: 2*).

Of symbols, besides a sword and halberd, one carries the wheel (*cakra*), the lasso (*pasa*), the sacred seal, and the carpenter's square (*chap.* xiii*: 2*). This square is typical of the carpenter's square used in China today, one arm of which is a foot-rule scaled to ten inches. This fresco foot measures 31.75 cm. or 12.5 English inches, which may possibly indicate the length of the Chinese foot when the fresco was painted. In the Shosoin there are foot-rules of the eighth century which measure 29.5 cm. to 30.4 cm. (*Shosoin; Harada, Tokyo, 1934, nos. 364 and 365*). In Tun-huang Sir Aurel Stein excavated a carpenter's foot-measure of probably the tenth century, which was 30.16 cm. or 11⅞ inches (*Serindia; Stein, p. 433, Pl.* xxxv); and a fragment of another of the seventh century, which was the same size (*Innermost Asia; Stein, Ast.* ix*.2.a.08*). The Chinese foot of today is 33.33 cm.

The wheel, of course, is the Buddhist Wheel of the Law, and the lasso is that by which demons were seized and bound. The sacred seal is definitely Chinese and contains two characters of *fu*, the lucky character of the ornaments on the Emperor's robes (*Fig. 24*). The carpenter's square also is Chinese and doubtless is a symbol of uprightness, from *chü*, a rule or pattern, as well as a square. The halberd or banner (*dhvaja*) which is carried by each of the two Guardians of the North is doubtless the "Banner of Victory" of Vaiśravaṇa (*To Wên*), the Regent of the North. One of these is in Tantric form, the attendant to Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*chap.* xiii*: 2*); and the other is in warrior form, in the tonsure scene of Emperor Wu (*chap.* xii*: 17*).

Another symbol is that of the Guardian of the South, who holds the staff of a ceremonial umbrella in his right hand (*chap.* xii*: 18*). This is one of his symbols, though he also carries a sword or club. The Tantric attendant of the Lord of the Southern Dipper may possibly be the Guardian of the South, for besides two swords he carries a bow and two arrows (*chap.* xiv*: 2*). In the Shosoin there is a drawing of Virūḍhaka (*Tsêng Chang*), the Guardian of the South, carrying a bow and two arrows, which seems to confirm this assumption (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku; Tokyo, vol.* xi, *Pl. 13*).

PART II

THE THREE FRESCOES

XII. The Paradise of Maitreya
XIII. The Lord of the Northern Dipper
XIV. The Lord of the Southern Dipper

COLOURED PLATES OF THE MAITREYA FRESCO

FIGURE 29

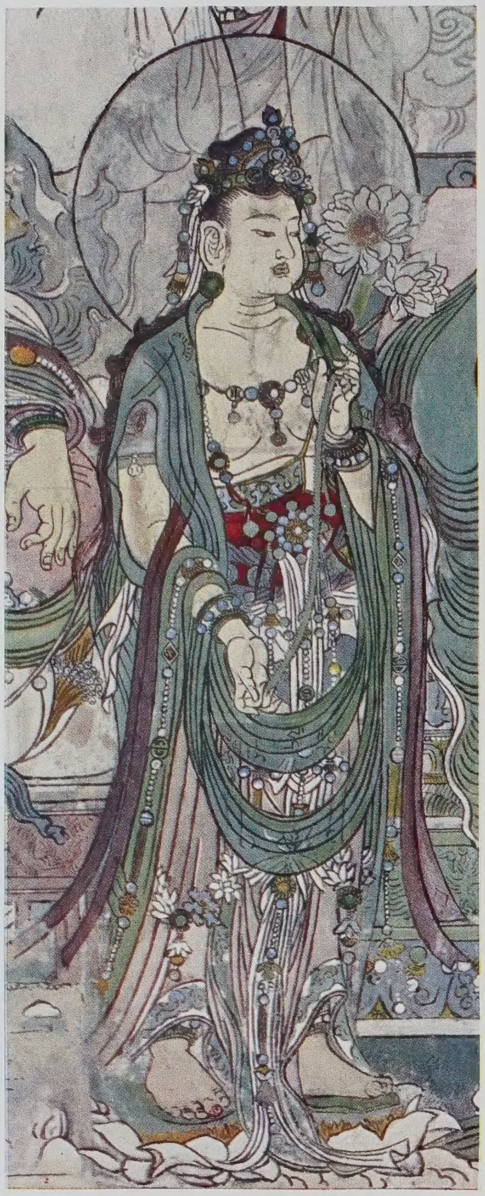
Attendant to Kuan-yin, Maitreya Fresco. Page 112.

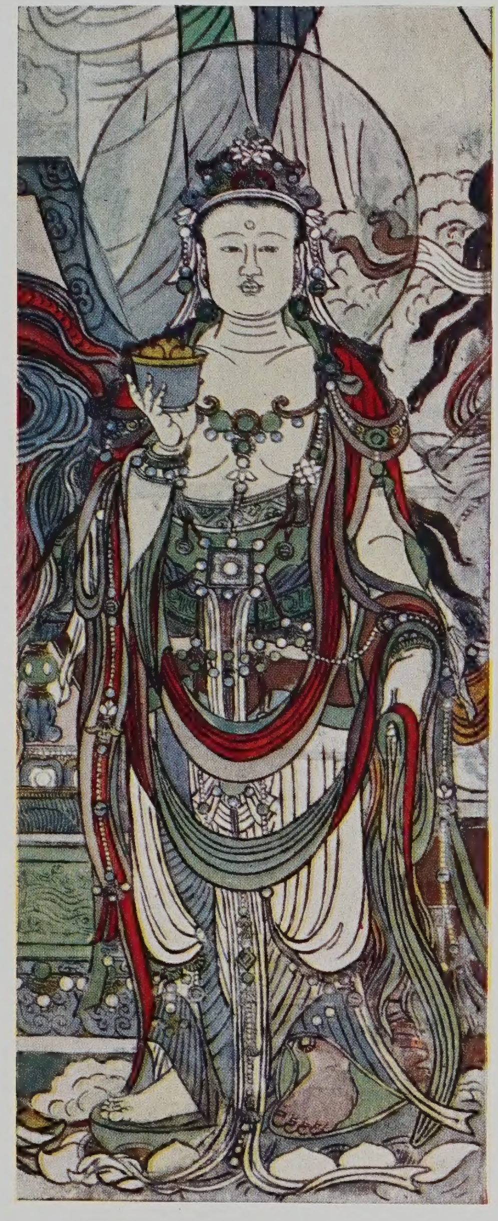
FIGURE 30

Attendant to Wên-shu, Maitreya Fresco. Page 113.

FIGURE 44

Celestial Cherub, and the Genius of Evil. Page 155.

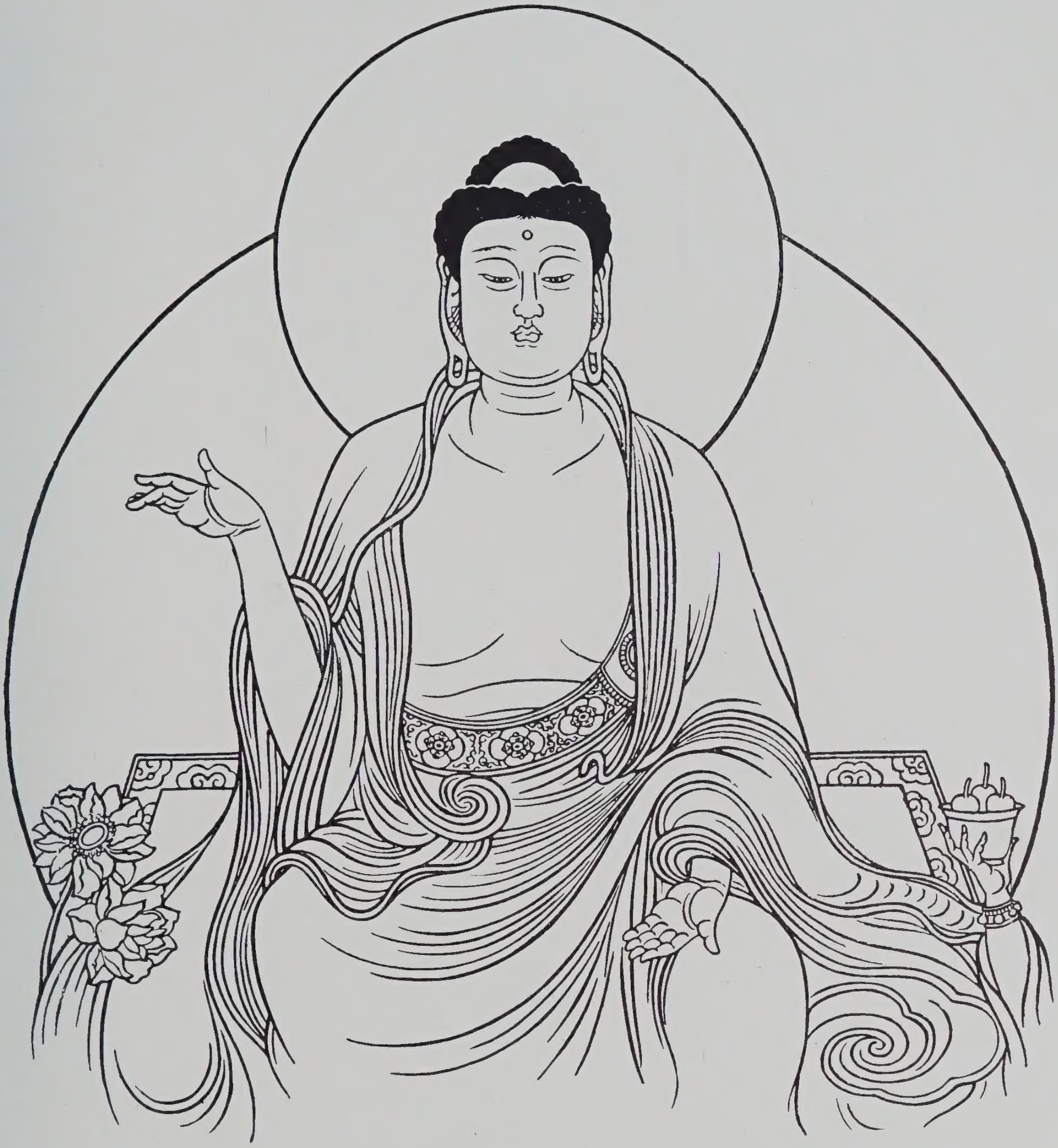




BUDDHIST

XI

THE PARADISE OF MAITREYA



TABLEAU

THE PARADISE OF MAITREYA

A. CENTRAL GROUP

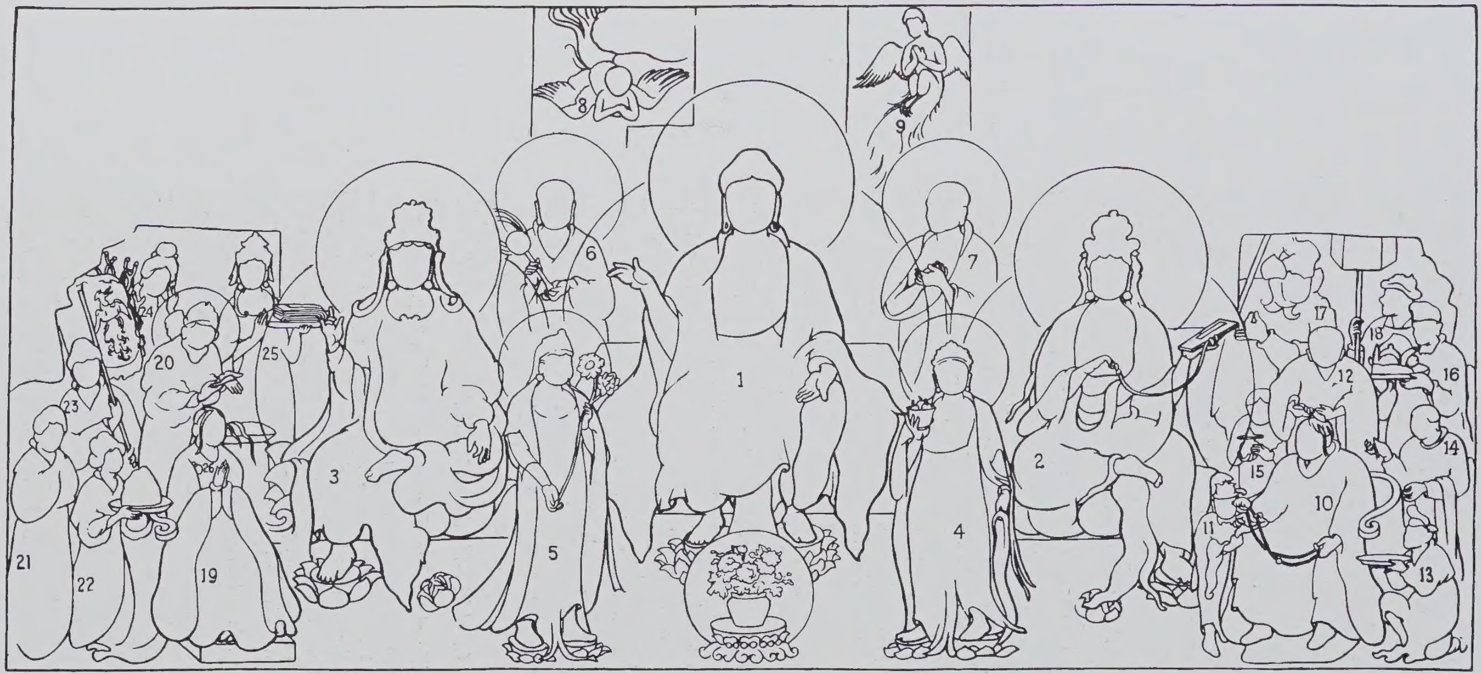
1. Buddha Maitreya—the Coming Buddha.
2. Bodhisattva Mañjusrī (Wên-Shu), Lord of Wisdom.
3. Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (Kuan-Yin), Lord of Mercy.
4. Celestial Attendant to Number 2.
5. Celestial Attendant to Number 3.
6. Monkish Disciple—Genius of Good.
7. Monkish Disciple—Genius of Evil.
8. Apsara—celestial cherub.
9. Apsara—celestial cherub.

B. RIGHT-HAND GROUP

10. Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty—Sixth Century.
11. Emperor's Son, the Crown Prince Hsiao T'ung.
12. A Barber Monk.
13. Attendant holding platter for hair.
14. Barber's Attendant.
15. Bearer of the covered reliquary.
16. Bearer of the Emperor's head-dress.
17. Mailed Guardian—Regent of the North.
18. Mailed Guardian—Regent of the South.

C. LEFT-HAND GROUP

19. Empress Hu of the Wei Dynasty—Sixth Century.
20. Celestial Being acting as Barber.
21. Attendant Guardian—Regent of the East.
22. Bearer of the Empress's head-dress.
23. Bearer of the Phoenix banner.
24. Attendant Guardian—Regent of the West.
25. Bearer of the folded towels.
26. Cherub in folds of Empress's robe.



LEFT HAND GROUP

19 Empress Hu of the Wei Dynasty_Early 6th Century
20. Celestial Being acting as Barber
21 Attendant Guardian _ Regent of the East
22 Bearer of the Empress' head-dress
23 Bearer of the Phoenix banner
24 Attendant Guardian _ Regent of the West
25. Bearer of the folded towels
26 Cherub in folds of Empress' robe.

CENTRAL GROUP

1 Buddha Maitreya _ the coming Buddha
2 Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Wên-Shu), Lord of Wisdom
3 Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-Yin), Lord of Mercy
4. Celestial Attendant to Number 2
5 Celestial Attendant to Number 3
6. Monkish Disciple _ Genius of Good
7 Monkish Disciple _ Genius of Evil
8 Apsara _ celestial cherub.
9 Apsara _ celestial cherub

RIGHT HAND GROUP

10. Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty_Early 6th Century
11 Emperor's son, the Crown Prince Hsiao T'ung
12. A Barber Monk
13 Attendant holding platter for hair
14 Barber's Attendant.
15 Bearer of the covered reliquary
16 Bearer of the Emperor's head-dress
17 Mailed Guardian _ Regent of the North
18 Mailed Guardian _ Regent of the South

FIGURE 32. *Key to the Maitreya Fresco.*

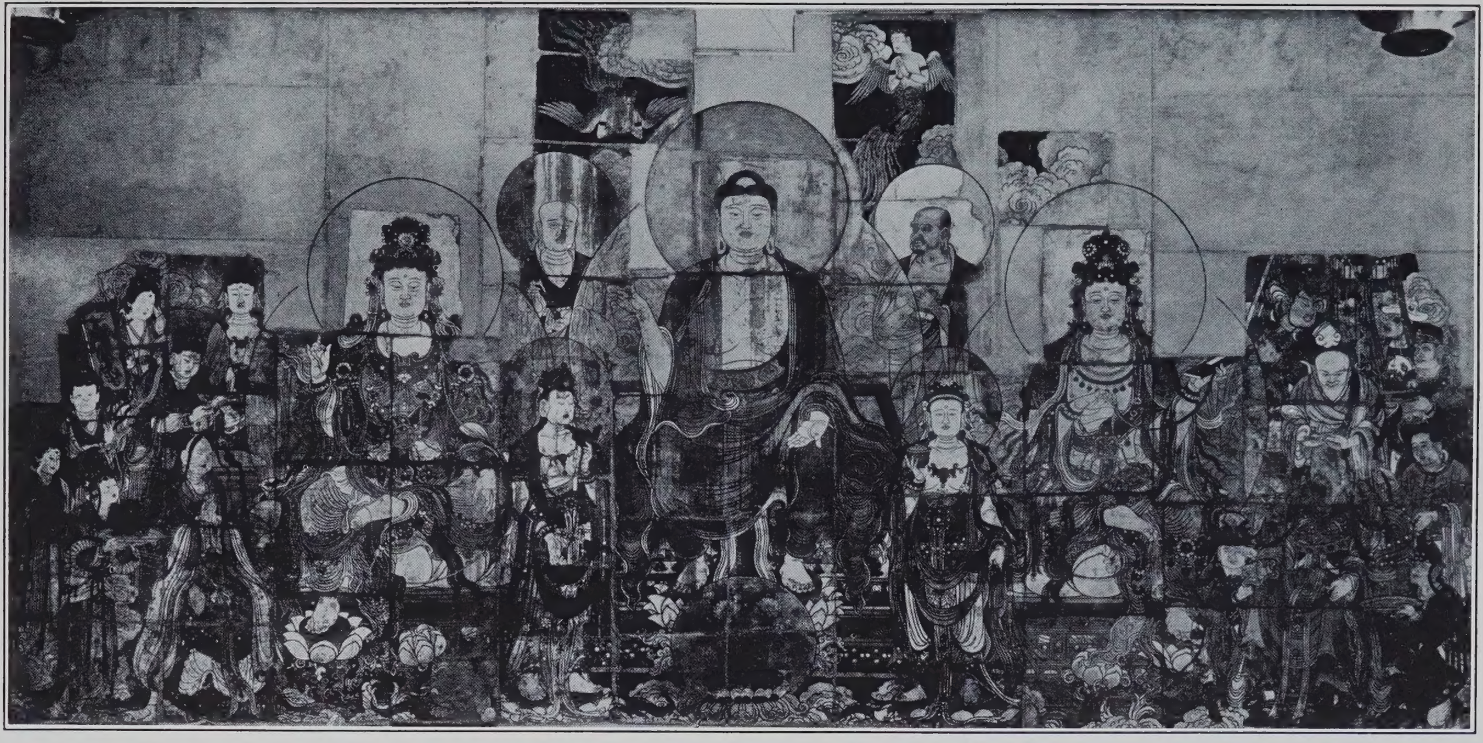


FIGURE 33. *The Paradise of Maitreya Fresco.*

XII

THE PARADISE OF MAITREYA

THIS fresco was originally on the walls of the Northern Monastery of the Hsing Hua Ssu, a Buddhist monastery situated nine miles south of Chi-shan county-town, in south Shansi, China. An inscription in the monastery points to the fact that the painting was done by a Han-lin scholar named Chu Hao-ku, whose home was near P'ing-yang Fu, about twenty-five miles away, and that it was completed on the fourteenth day of the mid-autumn month, in the year corresponding to A.D. 1238. The cost of painting was borne by two monks, An and Ning—"Peace" and "Tranquillity"—and for that purpose they had made donations of land. In the year 1237, that is the year before the frescoes were made, the Imperial Chancellor Yeh-lü had established a college at P'ing-yang Fu, and probably the artist Chu Hao-ku was among the group of scholars brought together in that cultural centre.

The fresco is of the character known as a Buddhist Paradise, that is a group composition in which the central figure would be an important Buddhist deity, attended by divinities and other personages. The central deity in this fresco is the Buddha Maitreya, the Buddha who is yet to come, and he is flanked on the left (Buddha's right) by Kuan-yin, the Bodhisattva of Mercy, and on the right by Wên-shu, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. These two are commonly known by their respective names of Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī. Besides these there are various attendants, and celestial beings in the clouds.

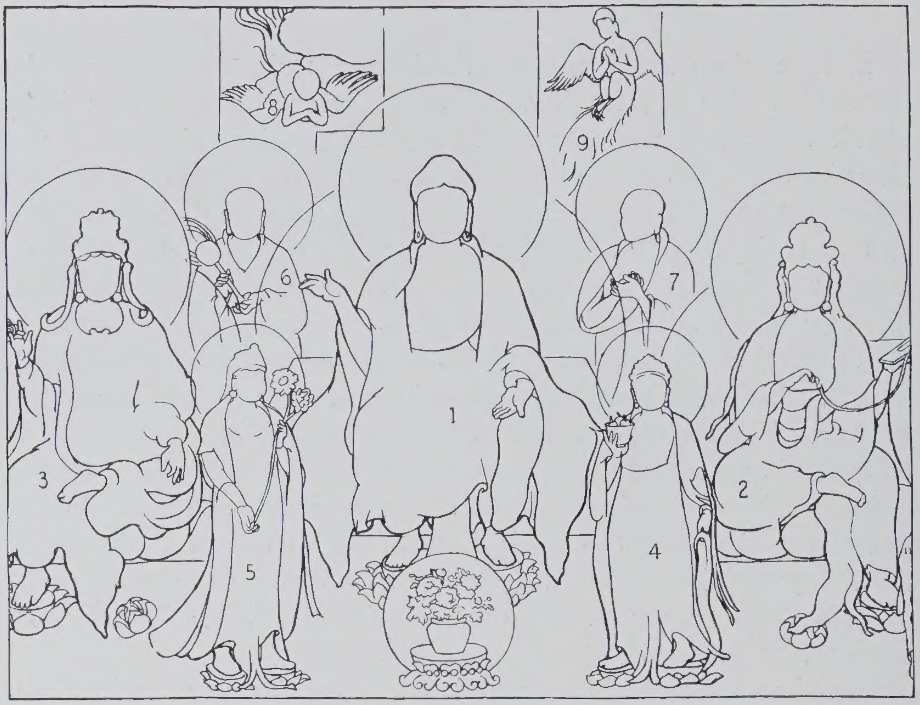
At each end of the painting, right and left, there is an historical group depicting a tonsure incident connected with two individuals who in their time were ardent devotees and benefactors of Buddhism, and who were contemporaries and lived in adjoining states. On the right is a group of men, the central figure of which is Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (A.D. 502-550), whose head is being shaved by a mendicant monk, in preparation for his retirement from the throne to enter the T'ung T'ai Monastery near by the capital city of Nanking. His son, Prince Hsiao T'ung, is by his side weeping, and there are various attendants including two Guardians of the Quarters, one the Guardian of the North and the other of the South, a reliquary-bearer, the barber and his assistants, and other figures. On the left is a female group, the central figure being the Empress Dowager Hu of the adjoining state of Wei. She also is getting her head shaved, for she had set up a convent in the precincts of the court at Loyang, and was herself to be the abbess. This incident took place in A.D. 528, while that of the Emperor Wu had taken place the year before, in A.D. 527. The Empress is attended by her head-dress bearer, her banner-bearer, a female divinity acting as barber, a towel-bearer, and the Guardians of the East and the West, both of whom are in female form, for this group is composed entirely of women, as the other group contains only men (*cp. Thousand Buddhas, Pl.* IX; *Serindia, Pl.* LVIII, *p. 1082: Stein*).

The background of the scene is the night sky, with white fleecy clouds below and above, for the whole composition is conceived as floating in the clouds. The fresco is in good condition; its colours of brilliant reds and greens, blues and yellows, now that the surface has been cleaned, stand out with freshness and sparkle, yet tempered with the mellowness of seven centuries of exposure in a draughty temple. Its black-lined haloes and figure outlines, filled in with their colour pigments, give an impression of *cloisonné* or stained-glass window. Over the whole there broods a spirit of serenity and quiet dignity, an atmosphere which soothes the spirit of the beholder, and breeds contentment and rest.

As to its size this fresco is 38 feet 2½ inches in length, and 18 feet 11 inches high.

A. The Central Group: A Paradise of Maitreya

1. Buddha Maitreya, the Buddhist Messiah, "he who is yet to come," is known as the Compassionate One. As one of the sacred writings says, "The Buddhas who have been, are, and will be, are more numerous than the grains of sand on the banks of the Ganges." Maitreya is the greatest of the Buddhas that are to be, and yet he



CENTRAL GROUP

1. Buddha Maitreya - the coming Buddha
2. Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Wên-Shu), Lord of Wisdom.
3. Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-Yin), Lord of Mercy.
4. Celestial Attendant to Number 2.
5. Celestial Attendant to Number 3.
6. Monkish Disciple - Genius of Good.
7. Monkish Disciple - Genius of Evil.
8. Apsara - celestial cherub.

9 Apsara - celestial cherub

FIGURE 34

Key to the Central Group, Maitreya Fresco.

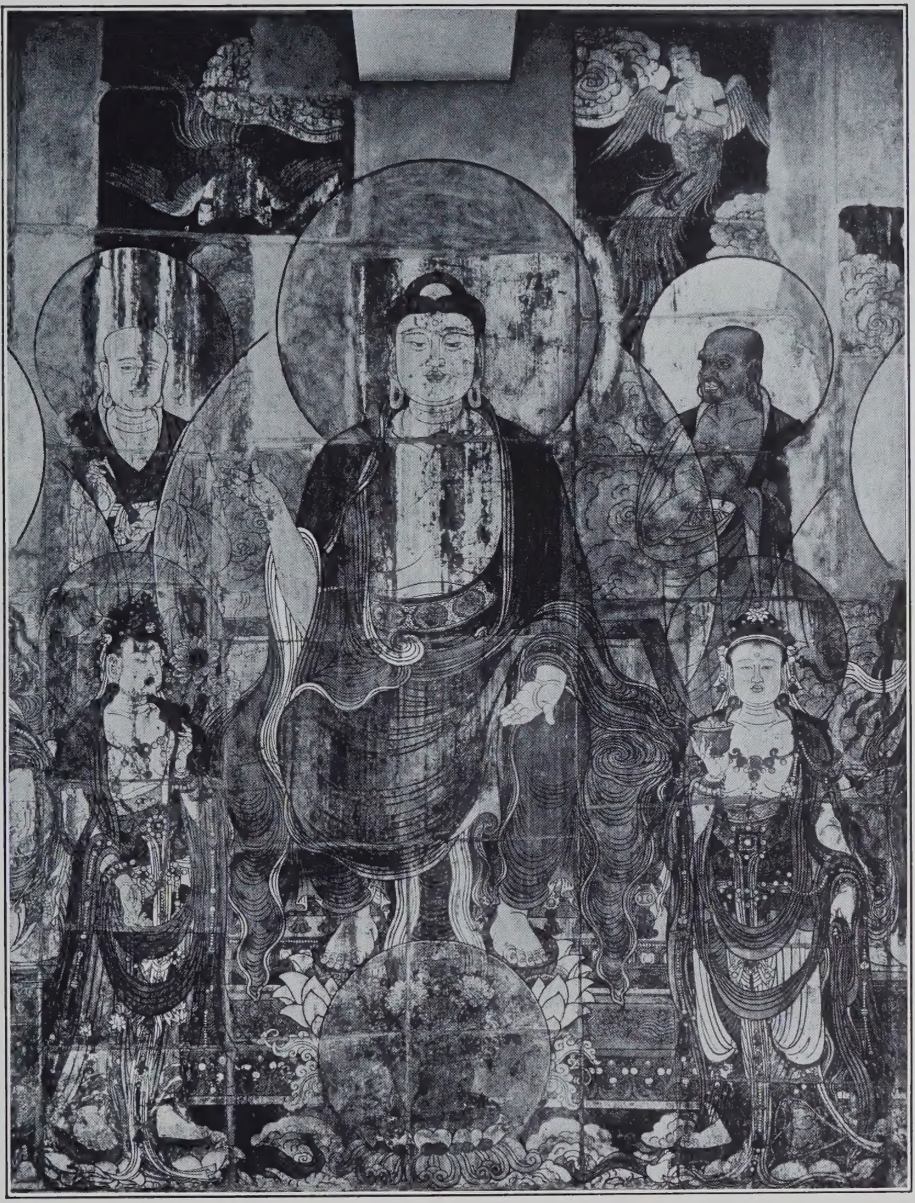


FIGURE 35

The Central Group, Maitreya Fresco.

is thought of as already a Buddha, watching over Buddhism, though his attainment of the Bodhi still belongs to a future age, which is entirely in keeping with the iconographic practice of Northern Buddhism. In China he shares with Kuan-yin the distinction of being the greatest favourite in Buddhist worship.

During life he was an Indian prince. After his death Sakyamuni is said to have visited him in the Tushita heaven when he appointed him to be his successor. Many Buddhist sages are believed to have transported themselves to the Tushita heaven to seek enlightenment from Maitreya on various religious points, one of whom brought back to earth the mystic doctrine of the Tantra, so that Maitreya is looked upon by certain sects as the founder of the Tantra school.

His image is found in most Buddhist temples in China, sometimes as a Buddha, sometimes as a Bodhisattva, his attire and attitude and associated symbols giving the clue to his representation. He is the only divinity in the pantheon of Northern Buddhism who is represented in European fashion, that is with legs pendent while seated, which is his position in this fresco. The *mudrā* or hand-posture of Maitreya may be one of four, the *dharmacakra* (teaching) *mudrā*, the *vara* (charity) *mudrā*, the *abhaya* (protection) *mudrā*, and the *vitarka* (argument) *mudrā*. That of this fresco is probably the *vitarka mudrā*, though it has a suggestion of the *abhaya mudrā*.

Maitreya is the future Fifth Manushi Buddha, and as such is always represented clothed in monastic garments without ornaments, and with the right shoulder and breast, or only the breast, bare, and with *ūrṇā*, stupa-shaped *ushṇīsha*, long-lobed ears, and skin of golden colour. The *ushṇīsha* is the protuberance on the top of the skull of a Buddha, which is the seat of the intellectual faculties, and is a sign of supernatural wisdom. It is the first and most important of the *lakshana*, or thirty-two superior marks of a Buddha, and is probably the last to be acquired. The *ūrṇā* is the fourth of the *lakshana*, and is the small round protuberance in the centre of the forehead. It is the divine eye—sign of spiritual insight, and is to be looked for in all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The hair, glossy black, arranged in short curls, each curl turning from left to right in the form of a snail is the second of the *lakshana*. The golden-coloured skin is the seventeenth, while the last and thirty-second is that his feet are flat and stand firm. All these and others are to be noted in the Maitreya Buddha of this fresco.

The Chinese name for Maitreya is Mi-lo-fo, and he is sometimes included as the eighteenth Lo-han, when he is known as the Lo-han of the Calico Bag (*Pu-tai Lo-han*), or the Laughing Buddha or Lo-han (*Hsiao Lo-han*). This representation of Mi-lo-fo as a seated big-bellied jolly individual, with a laughing and hope-inspiring face, is the god of the goldsmiths and silversmiths, and such a depiction of him began possibly in the Yüan or early Ming period. Previous to that Maitreya was always represented in the dignified style of a Buddha or a Bodhisattva.

In China Maitreya is still a great favourite, for he is the Buddha who is to return after the three thousand year period of Buddhistic life, to explain the Law again and recall men to its observance, and to bring blessing and happiness and tranquillity to the whole world.

Maitreya, the presiding Buddha, has his R. hand in *vitarka-mudrā*, L. hand lying on left knee palm upward, and he is seated in European fashion, with both legs pendent, and his bare feet resting each on a lotus flower.

He wears no jewels or decorative objects, though the border of his robe has a floral design in blue and white and gold.

His under robe is green in colour, lined with white. His overmantle, which really may be an elaborate stole, is of bright red, with a blue lining. The throne on which he is seated is a flat table-shaped dais, with bluish cloud-scroll border, and a white, possibly marble, inlaid centre. Its base is richly carved and decorated, and studded with gems which appear to be balls of jade. The body halo of the Buddha is transparent, but the head halo is opaque.

At his feet there is a bowl of red and white paeonies, set on a lotus-flower base, behind which is a transparent halo. The bowl is typical of the Sung-Yüan period, and by its colour, which is a purplish blue, it would seem to be of Chün ware. [*See Frontispiece*].

2. Mañjuśrī, the personification of Transcendent Wisdom, is the first Bodhisattva mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures, and he is closely associated with Sakyamuni.

Bodhisattvas are of the third class of Buddhist saints, who have to pass only once more through human life before reaching full

Buddhahood. They forgo Buddhaship in order to save mortals, and are usually personifications of certain attributes, such as wisdom, mercy, power, and light, and usually carry symbols illustrating their respective attributes.

Mañjuśrī, or Wên-shu as he is known to the Chinese, is the Lord of Wisdom. According to Chinese Buddhism, Wên-shu was informed by Gautama Buddha that it was his duty to turn the Wheel of the Law for the salvation of mankind, that is to be a teacher of the Law, and the place chosen for his manifestation was the Mountain of the Five Terraces (*Wu T'ai Shan*), at the north-eastern border of Shansi Province. This is one of the four sacred mountains of China, named from the five risings of peaks in the mountain range.

Mañjuśrī is looked upon by certain sects as the God of Agriculture, by others as the Heavenly Architect, and is believed to have inspired, with his divine intelligence, those who have been active in the propagation of the Buddhist doctrine. He is the God of Science, and swings his sword of Wisdom, with its flaming point, to dissipate the clouds of ignorance. It is said that when he preaches the Law every demon is subjugated, and every error that might deceive man is dissipated.

Mañjuśrī belongs to the group of Dhyāni-Bodhisattvas, and is therefore represented as a prince with Bodhisattva ornaments. His *mudrā* is the *dharmacakra* (teaching) *mudrā*, and his symbols are the sword of Wisdom, the book of Transcendent Wisdom (*Prajnaparamita*), and the blue lotus flower (*utpala*). He is frequently associated with a lion, and when seated his left leg is usually pendent. His book is generally represented in the form of a Nepalese book, which is made of palm-leaves with wooden slips for covers and bound together with a cord. It may be held in the hand of Mañjuśrī, but is more frequently supported on a blue lotus, and sometimes is surmounted by a flaming pearl (*cintamani*). It is interesting to notice how these symbols are paralleled in the Mañjuśrī of our fresco. The book he holds in his left hand is Chinese, the cord or tape which binds it leads from the book to his right hand, where it is held by a pearl terminal, in the *dharmacakra* (teaching) *mudrā*, that is by thumb and index

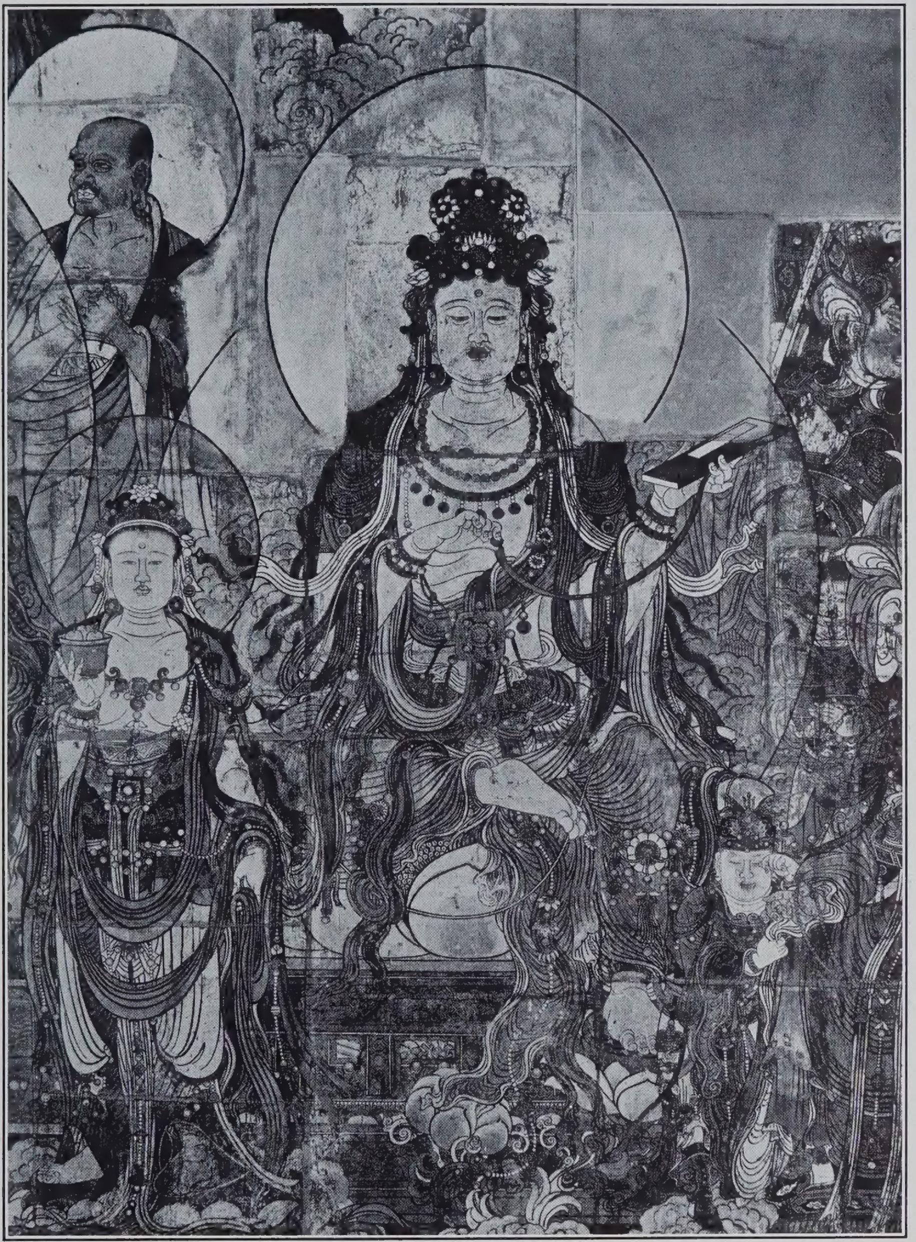


FIGURE 36

Wên-shu, the Lord of Wisdom, and his Attendant.

finger, with the hand at the breast. There is no sword and no lion, but there is a blue lotus-bud below the large lotus throne (*padma*) upon which Mañjuśrī is seated, and his left leg is pendent.

In China and Japan, Wên-shu is seldom worshipped except in a Trinity with Amitābha as the central figure, and Wên-shu and P'u-hsien on either side.

Mañjuśrī (*Wên-shu*), who is seated on Buddha's left as the place of honour, also has a transparent body halo and an opaque head halo. He is dressed as an Indian prince, and is seated on a lotus throne (*padma*), with L. leg pendent and foot resting on a small lotus, and R. leg crossed over towards the L. knee. He wears ear-discs, bracelets, and anklets; and a rich tiara of green, red, white and gold colours. From this tiara there hang white slender ties, as well as a very long unbroken cord, which is looped down by his sides and over his arms.

His skirt is of red colour, with a white lining, reaching only to the waist, where it is folded over and gathered under the belt which supports it. The belt is decorated with rectangular plaques of a green colour. His stole is green with yellow lining, wide at the shoulders, whence it is draped across the chest, over the arms and about the body, and the ends touch the ground. Over the stole is a second slender stole of red, with long ribbon streamers.

Around the waist, under the belt, is tied a bluish-green sash, one end of which hangs down in front, and the other falls over the R. leg. There is a plain circlet of jade beads around the neck, and below this is what appears to be another necklace, but is really the upper unit of an elaborate harness of gems and plaques, and strings of beads which reach to the feet. From the shoulder points of this second necklace decorative strings of gems lead down to a central rectangular plaque, and from this plaque of a pendant type there are suspended several strings of beads, with tasselled ends, of which one string is looped over each arm of the Bodhisattva.

The base of the lotus throne is rectangular, with inlaid panels, and below its centre is a blue lotus bud (*utpala*).

Since Bodhisattvas are considered sexless beings, it is usual in early depictions to give them a female form and yet emphasize male characteristics, as in this Bodhisattva who has a slight mustache and accentuated chin hairs.

3. Avalokiteśvara, the Kuan-yin or Kuan-shih-yin of China, and the Kwan-non of Japan, is the Fourth Dhyāni-Bodhisattva, the Lord of Mercy. Latterly he is popularly spoken of as the Goddess of Mercy, because he is often depicted in feminine form, but the earliest conception of him was that of a prince. His *mudrā* is the *namahkara* (prayer) *mudrā*, but he is found in other postures also. His symbols are the rosary, the flask, and the pink lotus (*padma*),

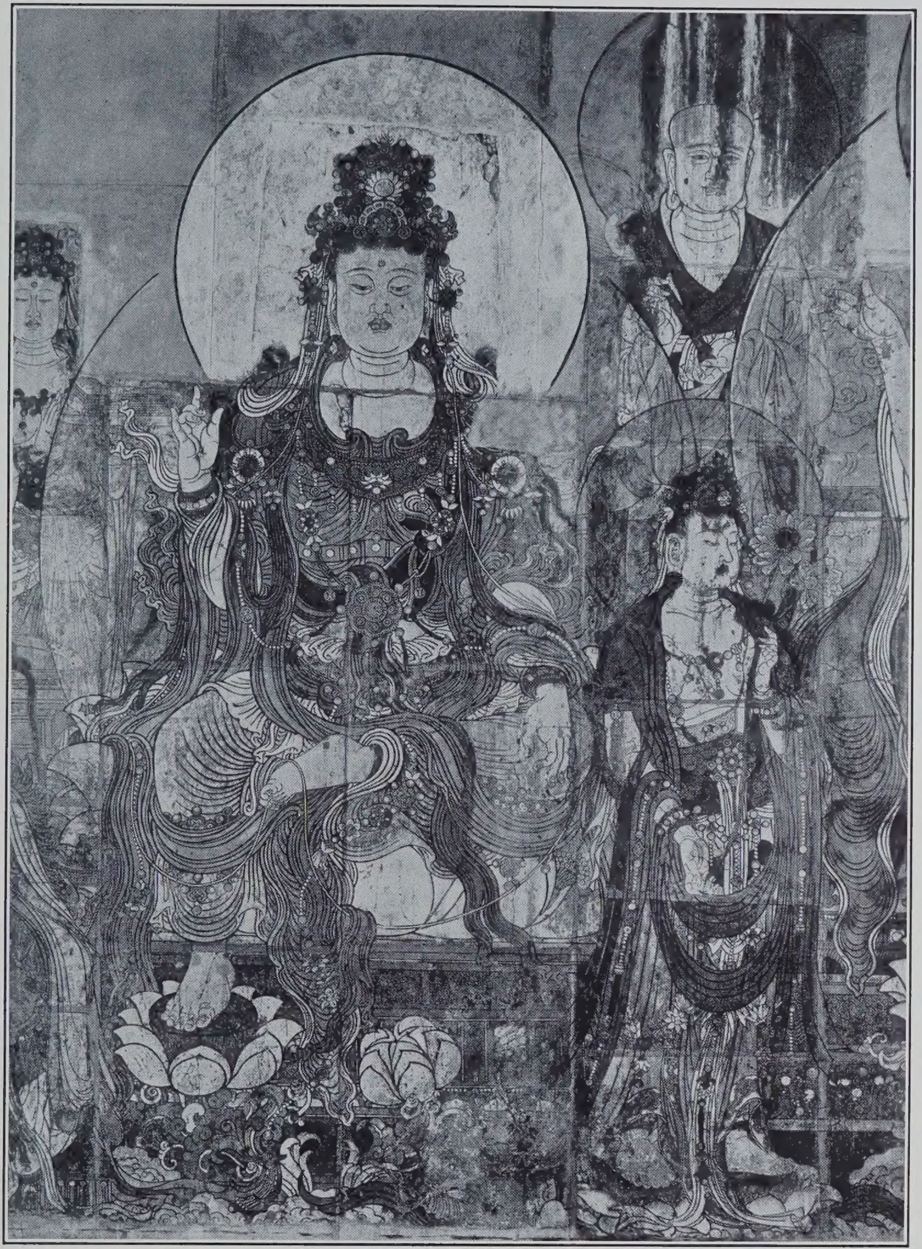


FIGURE 37

Kuan-yin, the Lord of Mercy, and his Attendant.

though other symbols are associated with him, especially in the many-handed forms of this deity.

It is related that once upon a time Amitābha-Buddha, after giving himself up to earnest meditation, caused a white ray of light to issue from his right eye, which brought Padmapani (Avalokita) Bodhisattva into existence. Amitābha blessed him, whereupon the Bodhisattva brought forth the prayer: "*Om mani padme, hum*"—"Oh! the jewel [of creation] is in the lotus!" Avalokiteśvara is thus the spiritual son of Amitābha, and as the personification of Power, and the All-pitying One, he is the most popular divinity in Northern Buddhism, his worship extending over a very wide territory. In Northern India his worship was popular from the third to the seventh century, but then the Mahayana school lost ground until by the twelfth century it had practically disappeared and the name of Avalokiteśvara became almost unknown. In Tibet he is looked upon as a representative of Buddha, and guardian of the Buddhist faith until Maitreya should appear on earth as Manushi Buddha. The figure of Avalokiteśvara was generally placed on a hill-top, which may account for his being called "the lord that looks down from on high," and is said to have been a relic of the old worship of the hill-gods. He is often worshipped in a triad, with Mañjuśrī, Lord of Wisdom, and Vajrapani, Lord of Power, on either side.

In his earliest form he is represented with one head and two arms, and either sitting or standing. Later representations sometimes show him with five heads, or ten heads with an additional head of Amitābha, his spiritual father, on top, making eleven in all. The many-handed form of this Bodhisattva is very common, and is found with arms varying from four to 1000 arms, and one is even said to have "22,000" arms radiating from the entire body. These arms usually carry emblems or symbols so that the list of symbols which may be associated with this Bodhisattva is a very formidable one. Sometimes the palm of each hand has an eye, in which case he is called the Bodhisattva of "22,000 eyes," which means that the eyes of Avalokita are ever on the outlook for those in distress, and carry with them a succouring hand.

The Chinese never readily accepted the Sanscrit name, Avalokiteśvara, but preferred that of Kuan-yin, and their conceptions of this deity showed themselves in the varied forms, most of which were of feminine type. That form in which the deity is holding a child (*sung tzu*) is very popular, as is also the Kuan-yin on a lotus holding a willow branch or vase, or prayer rolls. Another common form represents Kuan-yin crossing the waves of the sea (*kuo hai*) or seated on a lion.

Kuan-yin is usually translated as "the One who looks upon or heeds the sound or cry of the world," and thus he is the God (or Goddess) of Mercy. There is a Chinese legend behind this deity which links it with the daughter of King Chuang of the seventh century B.C., and, as the story goes, it was from a statue made in her honour that Kuan-yin obtained the name "the Bodhisattva Kuan-yin who has a thousand arms and a thousand eyes, great in mercy and great in compassion."

Avalokiteśvara (*Kuan-yin*) is seated on Buddha's right, in robes, posture and style, similar to the previous Bodhisattva, except that his R. leg is pendent. His R. hand is in the *vitarka* (argument) *mudrā*, and his L. hand rests on his L. knee, palm downward. His symbols in this case are the two lotus flowers carried by the attendant (*Fig. 38*), and the small pink lotus bud below the throne.

This Bodhisattva differs from the previous one in that he wears a red corslet, and his fore-arms are draped in white. Otherwise his robes and ornaments are in general the same, but differ in colour and slight detail. His skirt is of a mauve-coloured filmy material, with a white lining, and is supported at the hips with a wide green belt. A narrower green belt girdles the breast. His long stole is green, and slender red streamers hang from the shoulders. He also wears a sash of bluish-green similar to the previous Bodhisattva, and a similar sash is tied across the breast. In other respects the description of Mañjuśrī applies to this figure of Avalokiteśvara.

4. A standing celestial attendant of Bodhisattva type, probably the attendant of Mañjuśrī (Wên-shu), the Lord of Wisdom. The head halo is transparent but there is no body halo; and a *chün-yao* bowl of Sung type, containing three peaches, is held in the right hand at shoulder level. There is nothing to allow of a definite naming for this Bodhisattva (*cp. Serindia; Pl.* LXXIX, *ch. 001*).

This attendant to Mañjuśrī, in Bodhisattva form, and with transparent head halo, is standing between Buddha and Mañjuśrī, a bare foot on each of the two lotus-flower bases (*Fig. 39*). The skirt appears to be white, with a

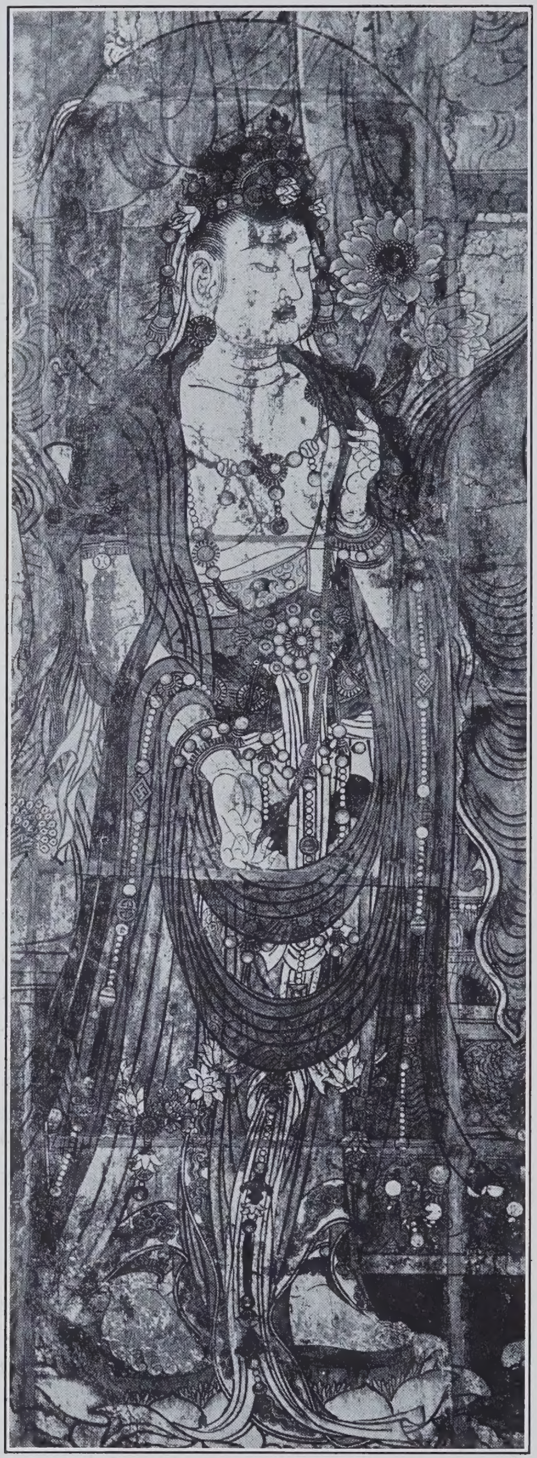


FIGURE 38

The Attendant to Kuan-yin.

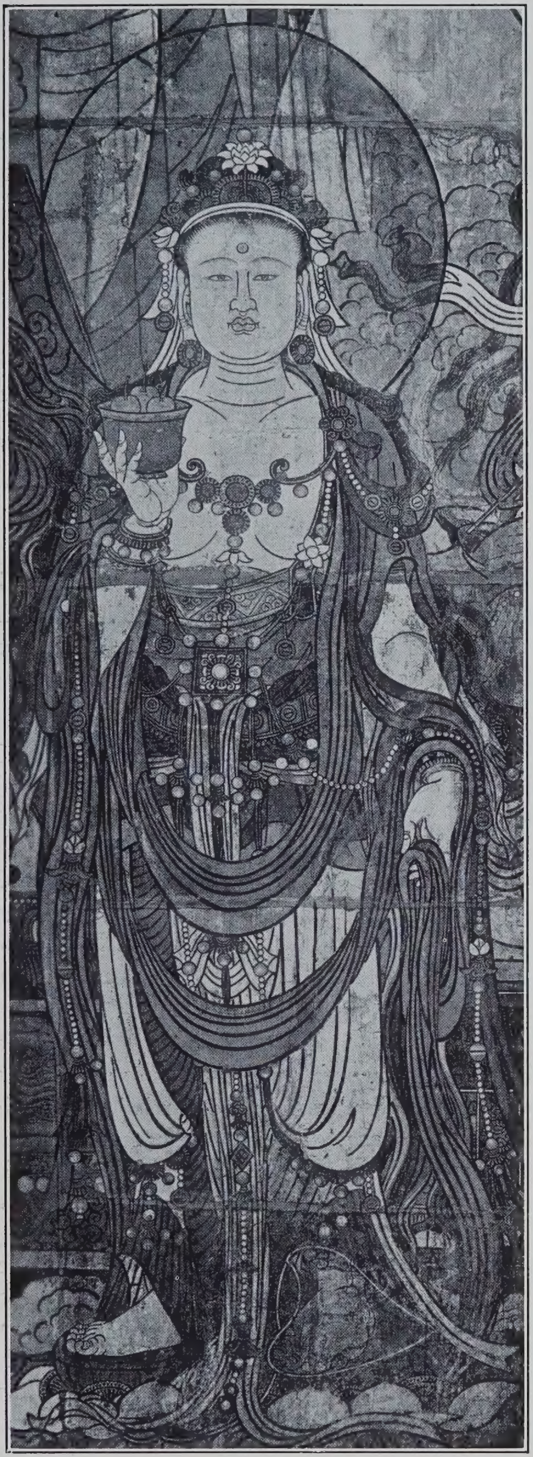


FIGURE 39

The Attendant to Wên-shu.

decorated blue border. The stole is red, with a brown edging, and it is lined with green. As usual the stole is draped over the arms and falls in front of the body in two loops, and one end of the stole is held in the left hand. Around the waist and over the hips is a short garment of green and brown colour, with a highly decorative border around the top.

The belt encircling this is decorated with rectangular green plaques, and from over this belt in front there fall two ends of a white sash, which extend to the ground where they spread out on either side.

He wears a tiara of red and gold and green, and from his shoulders there hangs an elaborate pectoral, which is continued down the front in a square bejewelled plaque with strings of jade and pearl beads, of which one is looped over each arm of the figure. The hair of the attendant hangs down in long flowing tresses. He is further decorated with ear-rings, anklets, armlets and bracelets.

The Chün bowl, held in the right hand at shoulder level and containing three peaches, stems upward, is of typical Sung shape, with outflaring foot rim, and unglazed top rim, while the purplish glaze of the body is the colour so greatly prized in this ware.

5. A standing celestial attendant of Bodhisattva type, probably the attendant of Avalokiteśvara (Kuan-yin), the Lord of Mercy, for two lotus flowers, the emblems of that Bodhisattva, are carried at face level. There is also a transparent head halo, but no body halo. The filmy green stole, whose trailing lines and delicate transparency make this the most graceful figure in the painting, clings to the shoulders and arms, is festooned across the front of the figure, and finally floats down to the ground (*cp. Serindia; Pl.* LXXIX, *ch. 001*).

This figure is in most respects similar to the previous attendant, except for the two lotus-flower emblems which are carried, and which are doubtless the emblems of Avalokiteśvara. There is the transparent head halo; the heavily jewelled harness covering the front of the body, and suspended from the shoulders and connected at the neck with a jewelled pectoral; and bracelets, anklets, armlets and tiara (*Fig. 38*).

The skirt is of light purple, with a border of green clouds on a white background. The upper part of this garment seems to be of bright scarlet, with a decorated border. The stole is green, of a filmy transparent gauze, draped over the shoulder and festooned over the arms, and hanging in two loops over the skirt. Under the stole, attached to the ornaments on the shoulders, there flow down on either side pairs of purple streamers (*Fig. 29*).

6 and 7. Monkish disciples, probably the Genius of Good and the

Genius of Evil respectively. For this interpretation, which is that given by M. R. Petrucci, there is evidence from the material found in the Tun-huang caves by Sir Aurel Stein (*Serindia; vol. III, Appendix E*).

The light-complexioned monk on Buddha's right, is the Genius of Good, and he is robed in a dark-blue garment lined with white, and tied at the waist with a white sash. Over his shoulders there is a scarlet mantle, which shows drab where it comes behind the halo. He carries the Buddhist fly-whisk, which is of a different form from that of the Taoists. This whisk is called a "yak's tail," and is made of horse-hair or vegetable fibre. Its origin is Indian, and it ranks almost as a symbol of Buddhist monkhood, for its use is to drive away flies in obedience to the first Buddhist injunction,—not to kill.

The dark-complexioned monk, ugly of features, and with ear-rings which are probably relics of his unregenerate days, is the Genius of Evil—though now converted by the Law. He wears a light-green robe, lined with white, and decorated with dark-blue borders and bars, the latter being characteristic of a mendicant monk's robe (*Fig. 44*).

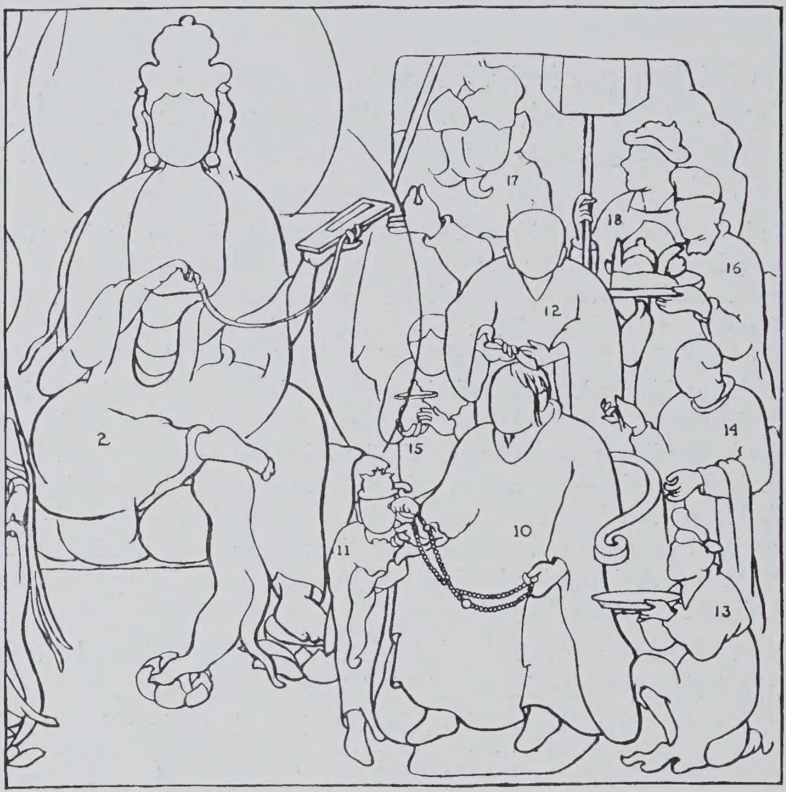
8 and 9. Apsaras, or celestial cherubs. These are beneficent heavenly beings, sometimes of bird-like form, which fly or float among the clouds and are often depicted as dropping flowers from above, on or around Buddhist divinities.

These two cherubs, part bird and part human, have their hands in the attitude of devotion. The bird part of their bodies is green in colour, while their wing and tail feathers are golden. They wear bracelets and armlets, and a golden tiara studded with jade beads. Their background is the dark blue sky of night (*Fig. 44*).

B. The Right-Hand Group: The Tonsuring of Emperor Wu

The two tonsure scenes depicted in this fresco both concern royal personages of the sixth century A.D. who were zealous Buddhists to the extent of taking monastic vows. The scene on the right of the fresco, that is on Buddha's left as the Chinese place of honour, has to do with Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty (*Liang Wu Ti*) who entered the T'ung T'ai Monastery near Nanking in the year 527. The other scene is concerned with the Empress Dowager Hu (*Pei Wei Hu Hou*) of the Northern Wei Dynasty, who became a Buddhist nun in the year 528, at Loyang in Western Honan, which was then the capital of Wei.

It would appear to be more than a coincidence that these



RIGHT HAND GROUP

10. Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty - Early 6th Century.
11. Emperor's son, the Crown Prince Hsiao T'ung
12. A Barber Monk.
13. Attendant holding platter for hair.
14. Barber's Attendant.
15. Bearer of the covered reliquary.
16. Bearer of the Emperor's head-dress.
17. Mailed Guardian - Regent of the North.
18. Mailed Guardian - Regent of the South.

FIGURE 40

Key to the Right-hand Group, Maitreya Fresco.

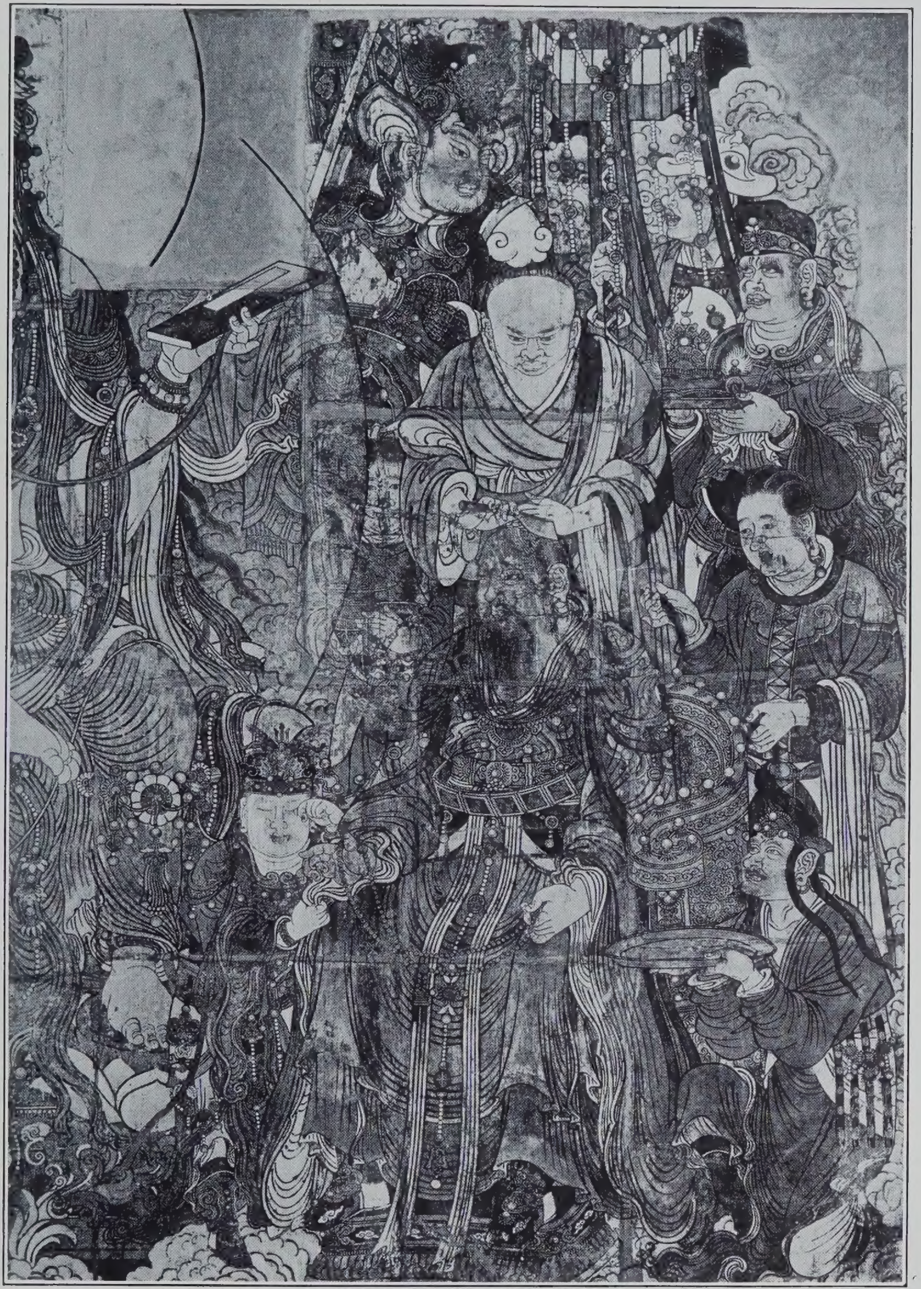


FIGURE 41

The Right-hand Group, Maitreya Fresco.

episodes of the conversion and dedication to Buddhism of these two rulers should be depicted on the walls of the Hsing Hua Ssu, the "Monastery of Joyful Conversion," and the monastery itself may well have been founded to commemorate such important historical events; if so the pictures might be even earlier than the date accepted, and the year 1238 be that of a restoration. It is well known that Emperor Wu in earlier years was an ardent Confucianist, promoting the study of the Classics and devoting large sums of money to building temples dedicated to the worship of Confucius and his disciples, the first temple of Confucius being erected in Liang in the year 505. Then he became drawn more to Buddhism, and thereafter was just as zealous a promoter of that religion. Bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth Indian Patriarch, who became the First Patriarch of Chinese Buddhism, arrived at Canton in 520, and his visit to the court at Nanking, about 526, was probably responsible for the Emperor's more zealous prosecution of Buddhist practices. However, the visit was not immediately fruitful, and Bodhidharma, being dissatisfied at the reception accorded him by the Emperor, left Nanking and set out for Loyang, the capital of the Wei State, where the Empress Dowager Hu was zealously propagating Buddhist teaching. The Emperor, regretting the loss of the great ascetic, sent a messenger to invite him to return. When the officer reached the bank of the Yang-tzu River, he beheld the monk crossing the swollen waters on a reed—which incident has become a favourite subject in Buddhist art. Bodhidharma refused to return and proceeded on his way to Loyang, where he took up his residence in the Shao-lin Monastery of Sung Shan, sitting for nine years in silent meditation facing a wall, so that he became known as the "Wall-gazer."

10. The Emperor Wu, who reigned from 502 to 549, was the founder of the Liang Dynasty, whose capital was at Nanking. His name was Hsiao Yen, and he was a kinsman of the House of Ch'i. Although a patron of both Confucianism and Taoism, he became completely dominated by his zeal for Buddhism. On three different occasions he left palace, treasures, wives, and children, and gave himself up to the life of a monk in his beloved monastery

of T'ung T'ai. The first occasion was in the year 527, and the fresco depicts the scene of his tonsuring at that time. Although he entered the monastery he did not fully abdicate his throne, and the growing disorders made it necessary for him to emerge and take up once more the burdens of state. Having overcome a menace from the adjoining state of Wei, he re-entered the monastery and lived as a common monk. Chaos ensued, and the difficulties that faced the country again demanded that he should resume his imperial duties, but it was not until his ministers had besought him three times, and agreed to pay a large ransom to the monastery, that he consented to come forth. He was a learned man, and is noted as the author of works on Buddhist ritual. He was very economical, partaking of only one meal a day, and that of the coarsest monastic fare, while he had common cloth for his garments, and wore a hat for three years. He had no inclination for wine, and permitted music only in connection with religious services. Interpreting the Buddhist commandment "Thou shalt not kill" in its strictest sense, he caused the sacrificial victims to be made of dough, and had the greatest abhorrence allowing sentence of death to be passed on a criminal, so that crime became rampant.

In 547 he entered the monastery for the third and last time, and there, overwhelmed by the increasing calamities of the times, he died in humiliation and want in the year 549. His third son, not the elder son who stands by him in the fresco and who had died in 531, succeeded him on the throne, but the Liang Dynasty collapsed entirely in 557. It is interesting to know that Emperor Wu's zeal for Buddhism made his state famous as a religious centre, so that we read of Corean envoys coming to court to seek copies of the Buddhist scriptures; but his state ministers must have considered this a dubious blessing. As one Chinese historian has said, "Of Buddhist emperors there have been many, but in point of mad devotion Liang Wu Ti leads them all."

The Emperor wears a green-coloured robe lined with white. Over this there is a red mantle, somewhat shorter than the robe, with floral decoration on the shoulders, from which fall slender streamers. Both garments have wide-flowing sleeves. They are drawn over the breast and fastened under the right arm, while around the waist is a double belt or girdle, the inner part being red in colour and decorated with plaques, the outer part, which may be a separate belt, being made of square plaques of turquoise matrix. Around the hips there seems to be a sort of peplum, brown in colour, and shaped in front. The shoes, though pointed, are not up-turned, and they have white heel-cap, decorated brown front part, and a shield over the instep which is set with gems. He is seated on a green, circular-backed throne chair, decorated with green cloud and floral patterns, and studded with jade knobs, while both feet rest on a decorated rectangular foot-stool. He holds in his hands a rosary of 108 beads, which is strikingly similar to the official beads (*ch'aò chu*) worn by Manchu officials.

Since he is being tonsured he wears no head-dress, but he still carries a simple ring in the lobe of his ear, and his face is heavily bearded.

11. The Emperor's Son, the Crown Prince Hsiao T'ung (A.D. 501-531). In the fresco he is depicted as a small boy standing at his father's right knee, but this is in keeping with Chinese practice in fresco painting, which depicts the more important personages as much larger than the less important ones, so that this eldest son of the Emperor, who was twenty-six years old at this time, is drawn as a small boy by the side of his father. It is recorded that this Prince, before he was five years old, had learned the Confucian Classics by heart, and his brief life was marked by great literary ability, especially in verse-making and in essay-writing. Some of his collections of compositions are well-known and highly valued today, and it is in one of his collections, the Wên Hsüan, that the poem "The Ling Kuang Palace at Lu" is found (*see chap.* 1).

He was handsome, of charming manners, mild and forbearing, and was universally loved. In 527, the year of the incident of the fresco, he had nursed his mother through her last illness, and his grief for her death impaired his constitution so that he never recovered. He died in 531, eighteen years before the death of his father the Emperor Wu, and his unvarying kindness had so won the people's affection that his death was bewailed throughout the kingdom, and being a devout Buddhist he was ultimately canonized.

The Prince is depicted as a small boy rubbing his eyes in sorrow at the thought of his father's impending departure. His robes are similar to those of his father. He wears a white under-robe with blue border; a white over-robe, and a red mantle, the front of which falls over as a sort of apron or flap touching the ground. Over this again are slender streamers, green in colour, which fall from a rosette at each shoulder, between which a lunar-shaped ornament stretches across the chest.

As in the Bodhisattvas it is from this pectoral ornament and its end fastenings that an elaborate harness of jewels and plaques extends down the whole front of the body. He wears bracelets, slender ear-rings, and a head-dress which is decorated at the top with a trident ornament and two feathers. His shoes have a white heel, green front half, and a decorated instep shield. He seems to wear greaves, green in colour and bejewelled, though they may be the upper part of high boots.

12. A barber monk, dressed in the barred and chequered robe of a mendicant monk.

He wears a white under-tunic, a grey over-robe, and above all a monk's yellow mantle, with black border edged underneath with green, and barred and chequered in black. A white cloth sash is tied about his waist. His head is close shaven, and he wears no jewellry, nor does he have an *ūrṇā* or a halo. His mantle is thrown back from his right shoulder to give his arm more freedom in his task. The razor he uses is of the type which has been common in China for centuries, and is still the kind in general use. When the earth was removed from the back of the fresco, until the pigment was reached on the under side, it was noticed that the face of the monk had been re-touched, and photographs of both sides seemed to point to the fact that when first painted the monk was looking away from his work, but the re-touching made him appear to be looking down on the Emperor's head, and paying attention to the work in hand (*Fig. 7A and B*).

13. An attendant holding a platter for the hair.

He wears a white under-tunic, a green outer-robe, and a wide white peplum at the hips, over which is a yellow belt or girdle from which hangs an ornament of four straps studded with jade discs. He is kneeling on his left knee, his right knee bent, and holds in both hands a shallow basin or platter. This platter may either be the wash-basin, or the tray on which the strands of hair would be placed, as in the case of the Empress Hu (*Fig. 43*); and being of yellow colour and of metal shape, it was probably of brass or gold. The attendant seems to be wearing a high turban, with a green ornament at the front, he has a ring in his ear, and his hair is braided in four plaits which hang down two over each shoulder. His leg is draped in a white cloth which may be a trouser leg, and his shoes are of brown material with high tops having blue borders.

14. The barber's attendant.

This youth is round-faced and pleasant looking, and his hair is in curly rolls. He wears an ear-ring with a jade bead pendant, but no other jewellry, except that his yellow belt at the waist seems to be decorated. His under-garment is white, his over-robe is red, and around the shoulders of the latter is an applique decoration of yellow, in cloud design, edged with light blue. From the throat to the bottom of the robe, in the centre, is a decorative strip of variegated blue colour. He wears at the hips the usual white peplum. Over his left arm hangs a towel, and in both hands he holds strands of hair.

15. An attendant holding a covered reliquary. On an occasion of this kind it was usual to prepare a receptacle to contain the hair, and such a vessel would be placed in the temple among the sacred relics.

This youthful person can just be seen between the right arm of the barber and the body halo of Wên-shu. He has curly brown hair, wears a blue over-robe, a fur jacket or mantle, a white peplum, and a yellow belt. In his two hands he holds at his breast a golden reliquary of Sung shape, with typical stupa cover, and decorated with designs in key and foliate patterns.

16. An attendant bearing the Emperor's head-dress. This individual is apparently the same type of servant as the attendant who holds the platter for the hair (*no. 13 above*).

His under-tunic is green, lined white. His over-mantle is red, lined with green, with gem-studded decorative border at the neck. He has the usual peplum at the hips, white in colour, and wears a yellow leather belt at the waist, and a white cloth sash tied round the breast. On his head he wears a blue turban with a frontal ornament, to which are attached short white streamers, and he has ear-rings of simple form. He holds a golden-coloured circular tray in both hands, on which rests the Emperor's head-dress, which is white and green, ornamented with gold and gems.

17. A mailed Guardian or Lokapala—Regent of the North. Lokapalas (*Hu Shih Chê*) or Protectors or Guardians of the Universe, were also known as the Four Great Diamond (Heavenly) Kings (*Ssu Ta T'ien Wang*). In China they are the guardians of temples, for having been demon-kings and becoming converted, they were made protectors of the homes of the gods. They symbolize the four seasons, and control the four elements, fire, air, earth, and water. They are located in the covered main entrance to a temple courtyard, two on each side, and are large, grotesque

figures, standing in full armour, bearing their respective symbols, and oftentimes are trampling with their feet on prostrate demons. They are seldom worshipped, but worshippers of the other gods in the temple also sometimes burn incense sticks before the guardians. They are supposed to have bodies, minds, and a faith as strong as steel because of their pure living. They have been known in China from early times, and there are both Taoist and Buddhist conceptions of them. Recent discoveries at Tun-huang and Turfan, as well as the great numbers of T'ang-period clay figures of Lokapalas, show how prevalent and popular these guardians were. In Buddhist mythology they were assigned the guardianship of the four sides of Mount Meru against *asuras* and other noxious influences.

The four guardians, and their respective characteristics, are as follows (*cp. Dictionary of Chinese Mythology, E. T. C. Werner, p.452*).

(*a*) Vaiśravaṇa. Presides over the North. The God of Winter. Chinese Buddhist name—*To Wên*, "One who hears much." Taoist, *Mo-li Shou*. Symbols: pearl and snake, but in India and Tibet it is a banner, an ichneumon, a jewel, or a *stūpa* containing a sacred object.

(*b*) Virūdhaka. Presides over the South. The God of Summer. Chinese Buddhist name—*Tsêng Chang*, "Increased grandeur." Taoist, *Mo-li Hung*. Symbols: a club is his usual symbol, or else an umbrella; but in Tibet it is a sword, and a helmet made of the skin of an elephant's head. A bow and two arrows may possibly be associated with this guardian (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku: Tokyo, vol.* XI, *Pl. 13*).

(*c*) Dhritarāṣtra. Presides over the East. The God of Spring. Chinese Buddhist name—Ch'ih Kuo, "Ruler of the Kingdom." Taoist, *Mo-li Hai*. Symbol: guitar, or bow and arrow (*Serindia; Pl.* LXXXV *and* XC).

(*d*) Virūpāksa. Presides over the West. The God of Autumn. Chinese Buddhist name—*Kuang Mu*, "Large eyes." Taoist, *Mo-li Ch'ing*. Symbols: sword, a stupa, and a snake. He is the King of the Nagas, the snake-demons, and the Naga-tree or sacred coral is associated with him.

The Regent or Guardian of the North has a large round face, and this is accentuated by his large head-dress, with wing flaps over the ears, which is tied under his chin. His under-tunic is white, his over-mantle is red, but his stole is of undetermined colour, as it is seen only through the halo. He wears a coat-of-mail reaching to the knees, having rectangular scales; and over this is a corslet, trimmed with green, with prominent white shoulder ornaments. A large monster-mask hangs from the waist girdle in front; and he is equipped with greaves and fore-arm guards, both armoured with rectangular scales. He carries a banner-staff over his right shoulder, but its top is not seen in the picture, though a part of the banner itself, in red and green, may be seen in the background (*cp. chap.* XI).

18. A mailed Guardian or Lokapala—Regent of the South. This Guardian, and the preceding Guardian of the North, are corollary to the two Regents of East and West, which may be assumed to be among the attendants of Empress Hu in the corresponding tonsure scene on the left of this fresco.

Very little of this individual can be seen on the fresco, except his head and shoulders, and his remarkable helmet. This helmet is white in colour, of a peculiar shape, and must be accepted as made of the hide of a white elephant's head, which is a Tibetan convention of the helmet of Virūḍhaka, the Regent of the South (*The Gods of Northern Buddhism; Getty, Oxford, 1914, p. 148*).

He wears a white under-tunic, a bluish-green over-mantle, and a steel-coloured corslet, armoured with rectangular plates, and edged across the top with a wide border of brown leather.

He holds in his right hand the staff of a ceremonial umbrella, the cloth curtain of which is green and white in horizontal bars, and from which red streamers and strings of gems hang down as an elaborate fringe.

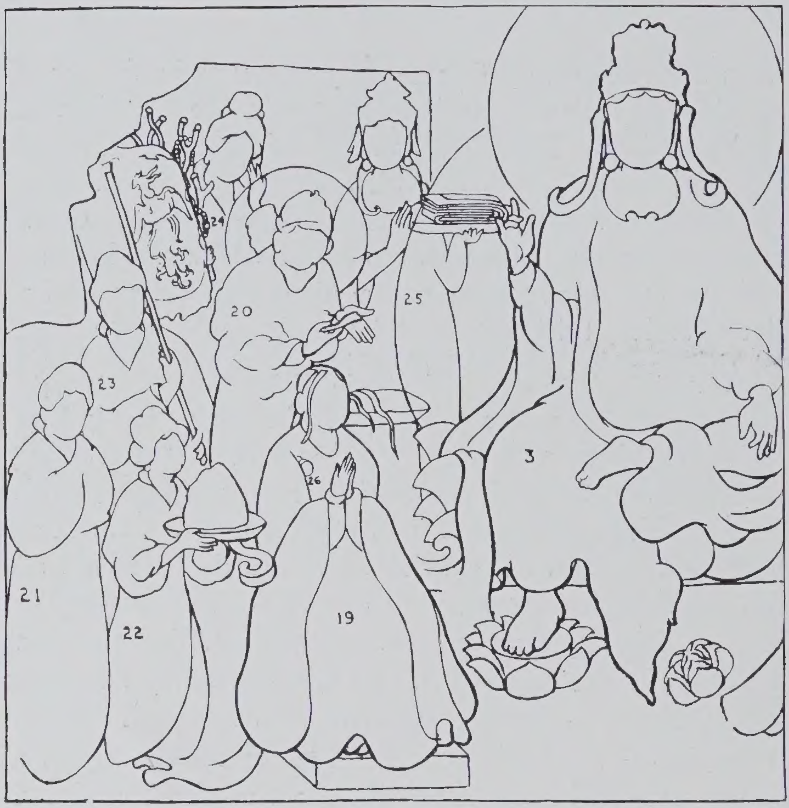
C. *The Left-Hand Group: The Tonsuring of Empress Hu*

At the beginning of the sixth century the Chinese Empire was divided between the Tartars in the north and the Chinese in the south. The Southern Dynasty was that of Liang, and Emperor Wu of the tonsure scene described above was the most prominent occupant of the throne. At the same time in the north there was the Northern Wei Dynasty. Several Emperors of Wei were ardent Buddhists. Beginning with Hsien Wên in 466, who spared no expense to promote Buddhism: one image alone, constructed in 467, was forty-three feet high and required fourteen thousand pounds of brass and a thousand pounds of gold. Moreover this

Emperor, after ruling only five years, abdicated in favour of his five-year-old son, Hsiao Wên, in order to devote his time to the study of Buddhism. It was the consort of Hsüan Wu, the son of Hsiao Wên, who did most for Buddhism in the Wei State. Emperor Hsüan Wu reigned from 500 to 516, and during that time Buddhism was greatly extended, so that when his son Hsiao Ming came to the throne in 516 there were four hundred and fifteen sets of the Buddhist Classics, thirty thousand temples, and more than two hundred thousand monks and nuns in the state.

19. The Empress Hu, the mother of the new young Emperor Hsiao Ming, had been a palace concubine, and now as the Empress Dowager Hu she continued the work of strengthening Buddhism. Among other things, she was responsible for much of the sculpture of the Lung Mên caves. The histories do not deal kindly with this Empress, for though she was a zealous Buddhist, yet her life was anything but in keeping with the tenets of Buddhism. In 520 the ministers of state deposed her from the regency and kept her virtually a prisoner in the North Palace for five years. Regaining her freedom in 525 she again attempted to resume the regency, and then calmly poisoned her son the Emperor at the first sign of his wishing to exert his authority. This was in the year 528 when the boy was but fourteen years old, and in his stead she placed a three-year-old child on the throne. The people rebelled, and to save her life she fled from the threatened palace to a quiet nunnery, where she assumed the coarse cotton robe of a nun, and submitted to the tonsure, in token of complete renunciation of the world. But Buddhism for which she had done so much failed to save her—she was dragged from her hiding-place away towards the river, and together with the infant she had placed on the throne she was pitched over the parapet into the waters below. The tonsure scene of the fresco is the depiction of the final Buddhistic act of the Empress Dowager Hu, in those grey hours before her death in 528.

The Empress, with her hands in the attitude of prayer, is seated in a large circular-backed throne chair, decorated in green and gold, and studded with jade beads. Both feet rest on a jade-studded rectangular foot-stool. Behind her is a square table on which rests a shallow pan, yellow in colour



LEFT HAND GROUP

19. Empress Hu of the Wei Dynasty - Early 6th Century.
20. Celestial Being acting as Barber.
21. Attendant Guardian - Regent of the East.
22. Bearer of the Empress' head-dress.
23 Bearer of the Phoenix banner.
24 Attendant Guardian - Regent of the West
25. Bearer of the folded towels.
26. Cherub in folds of Empress' robe.

FIGURE 42

Key to the Left-hand Group, Maitreya Fresco.

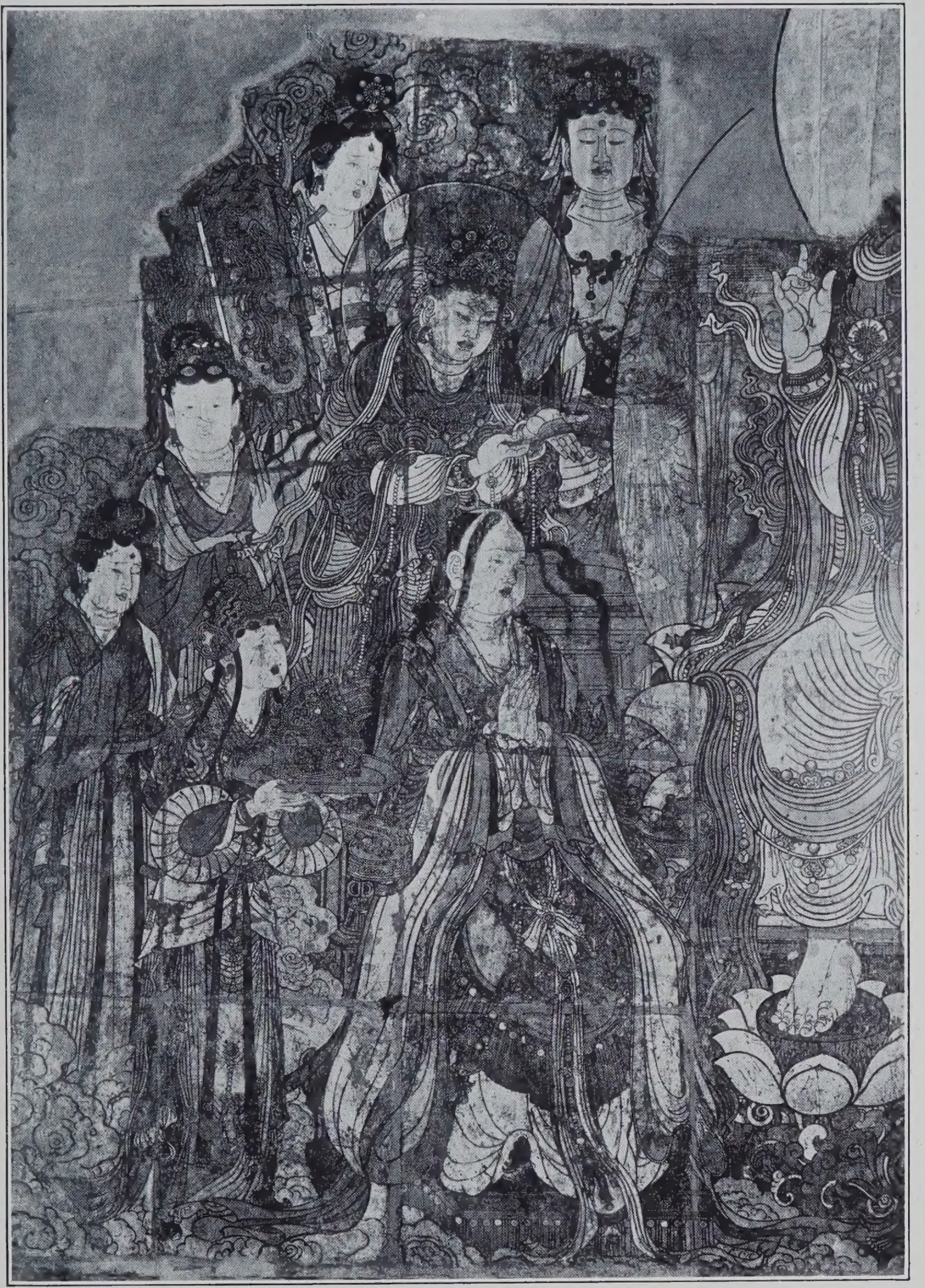


FIGURE 43

The Left-hand Group, Maitreya Fresco.

and possibly of gold, on which are laid out strands of hair, one plait of which is twisted into a figure-of-eight knot.

She is wearing a white under-tunic, which is to be noticed at the wrist. Over this is a white robe, which is decorated with floral borders, the inside of which is of plain green. There is an over-mantle or stole of green draped round the shoulders; and in front is a red garment, with a wide green decorative fringe at the bottom, trimmed with gold and gems, which has the appearance of an apron. The sleeves of the robes are full and flowing, and one set has round the mouth of the sleeve a feathered trimming of green. Over the wrists are what appear to be green napkins, which are evidently intended to protect the sleeve ends from soiling. She does not wear ear-rings, and the lobes of her ears are not pierced, but she wears bracelets, and a pectoral of gold and green. This pectoral probably is connected with the composite group of ornaments and beads which spread over the front of the robes, as in the case of the Bodhisattvas above. A white sash is suspended from the waist, and hangs down in two streamers which trail on the ground at her feet.

Her shoes which just appear from under the long robes, show an upturned toe-end, decorated with a fowl or phoenix.

20. The Celestial Being acting as barber is a female figure of Bodhisattva type, with the ūrnā on her forehead, and a transparent head-halo. She is the only person in the group with a halo, and might possibly be an idealistic representation of the abbess of the convent in which the Empress took refuge, who would herself probably be the person to perform the tonsure. She is sharpening the razor on the palm of her hand, which is characteristic in China, while in front of her is the platter with strands of hair laid across it. This platter may have been the wash-basin that was used, for it was customary in China not to use soap for shaving, but hot water, and hot wet towels.

She is wearing a mauve-coloured skirt with line decoration, and a corslet of red in general similar to that of Kuan-yin. A stole of green with brown centre is draped round her shoulders, and from this fall slender red ribbons with a white edge. There is a blue filmy ruff at the elbow, and the fore-arm is swathed with white drapery. Her tiara is green, red, and gold, studded with gems, and from it hang slender white ties. She wears bracelets and ear ornaments; and a large pectoral ornament of cloud design, which again is connected with the usual scheme of ornaments which hang down the front.

Her hair falls below the shoulders in light tresses, as does that of all the other Bodhisattvas.

21. Attendant Guardian—Regent of the East. There is little to

indicate the function of this female attendant, but the fact that her hands are hidden under the folds of her shawl as if something were carried there, points to the planetary deity Venus, carrying a lute or guitar covered with a cloth. Such a representation is found in the fresco of the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*chap.* XIII*: 24; Fig. 59*). This then would be a female representation of the Guardian Dhritarāstra, who presides over the East, who is the God (or Goddess) of Spring and of Music, and whose symbol is a lute.

She is clothed in a simple long white robe, and a blue mantle or stole, with floral decoration, is draped like a shawl round her shoulders and breast. From her shoulders hang slender red streamers. Round the waist is a double belt, an inner one with decorative discs, and a plain outer one with green rectangular plaques. From this belt hang simple streamers of a brown colour, but there are no beads or gems. At the hips there is a brown peplum with floral border. The hands are hidden under the shawl-like mantle, and doubtless they would be holding the covered lute. Her black hair is arranged in a high coiffure, and the green jade ornaments thrust into the hair are of unusual shape. She also wears jade ear-ornaments.

22. The bearer of the Empress's head-dress. This presumably is a close attendant or maid-in-waiting, for her own head-dress is in general similar to that of the Empress.

She is a slender young girl, probably unmarried, for her hair hangs down in double plaits. She wears a high tiara of green and gold, blue and white, carries both ear-rings and bracelets, and at her neck is a large pectoral from which are suspended a decorative plaque and strings of beads. She is robed in a mauve-coloured garment lined with white; over which is a red mantle or stole, with a blue and gold decorative pattern on the shoulders, and a lozenge-design border. At the elbows are simple white ruffs, and the fore-arms are draped in green material, edged with a white border. Low down on the hips is the usual white peplum, and a belt of green encircles the waist.

In her hands she holds a circular golden tray, on which rests the head-dress of the Empress, the decoration of which is mainly green, studded with gems.

23. The bearer of the Phoenix banner. This female is less pretentiously dressed, and would probably be of lower rank than the latter. The phoenix is the emblem of the Empress, as the dragon is the emblem of the Emperor.

Her black hair is decorated with green and gold ornaments. She wears ear-rings, but no necklace or other jewellry. Her inner-tunic is white, her outer-robe is plain green, and a mantle or stole of white, decorated with a fine linear pattern in black, is draped round her shoulders, while a white sash is tied round the waist. She carries a staff over her left shoulder, at the top of which is a rectangular banner, with a dark-blue frill around the border, and jade beads attached to the frame. The staff divides the plaque-like banner into two halves, in each of which, on a red background, is depicted a green phoenix, one ascending and the other descending.

24. Attendant Guardian—Regent of the West. Since the Regents of the North and the South are depicted in the right-hand tonsure scene, it might be expected that the Regents of the East and the West would be found in this tonsure scene. This seems to be the case, for besides the Regent of the East described above (21), this figure fulfils the necessary characteristics relative to Virūpāksa, the Regent of the West. She carries a green coral tree on which is entwined a string of pearls or gems, or possibly a Buddhist rosary of precious stones. Coral offerings, and the Naga coral-tree, are common in Buddhist paintings, and are depicted on banners and frescoes of the ninth and tenth centuries discovered at Tun-huang (*Serindia; pp. 974, 1008, 1040, 1054*). The Naga-tree or sacred coral has reference to the "Treasures of the Nagas" won by Vaiśravaṇa, the Regent of the North, and presented as an offering to Buddha. Another Regent, Virūpāksa, who presides over the West, and the season of autumn, is King of the Nagas. It is quite evident that this attendant carrying the Naga-tree and rosary is a female depiction of Virūpāksa, the Regent of the West, and is the companion to the attendant described in No. 21 above, who is probably the female representation of the Regent of the East, the Goddess of Spring. The two would be in apposition to the Regents of the North and South in the opposite tonsure scene, and thus complete the Four Regents. They would be depicted in female form in this case, since the whole scene is confined to females.

She has a black hood-like covering, lined with green, over the hair, with a jade and gold rosette-shaped ornament at the top. She wears a light-blue or green-coloured robe, and a mantle of undetermined colour, but which has a polychrome decorated border. Her waist is girdled with a yellow belt of rectangular plaques, under which is a red sash, and from which streamers hang down. She wears green ear-drops, but no other jewellry; and carries a branch of green coral, on which is draped a rosary or string of gems.

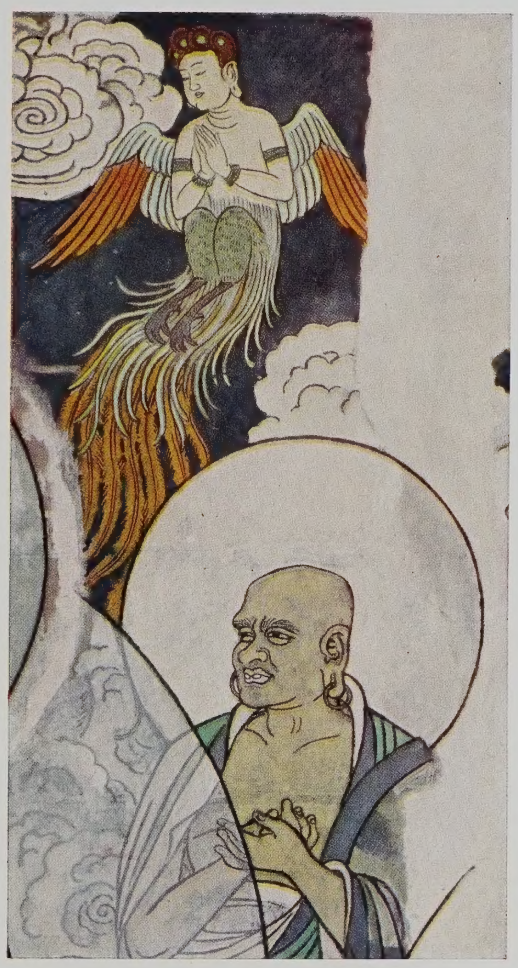
25. Bearer of the folded towels. These towels, as stated above (20), would be required in the shaving operation.

She wears a tiara of green and gold, studded with gems, in her ears are green disc ornaments, and she also wears green bracelets. The ūrṇā in her forehead is probably a later addition and should not be there. Her robe is mauve-coloured, and her mantle or stole is green lined with white. She wears a pectoral ornament, and this is probably connected with the strings of gems and ornaments which hang down the front. She also wears a peplum at the hips. In her hands she holds a green-coloured tray on which are what appear to be folded towels, though the line at the top seems to suggest the title cartouche of Chinese books, in which case they would be Sutras or similar sacred writings.

26. Cherub in the folds of the Empress's robe. This might possibly be a suggestion regarding the infant Emperor, who was taken into the nunnery by the Empress when she fled there for refuge, and who was shortly after drowned with her, but such must be ruled out by the fact that a similar cherub is found in the bosom of the Empress of Heaven of the Taoist fresco (*cp. Fig. 72*). The Tantra belief that the soul of every individual takes the visible form of an infant may be an explanation. That it was a general conception with some symbolic significance is evident, and this is not discounted by the fact that it might be a decorative emblem on the robe of the Empresses.

FIGURE 44

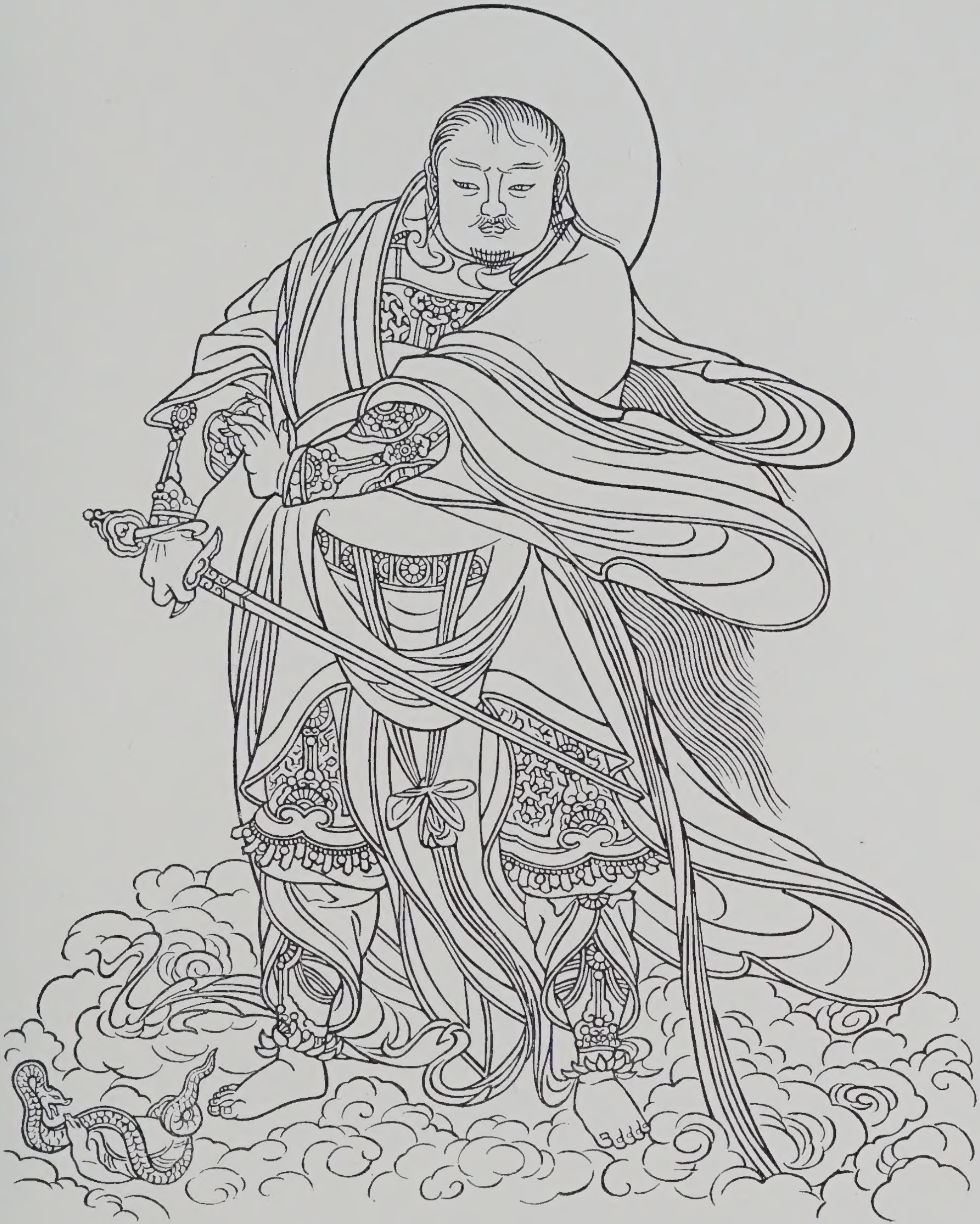
Celestial Cherub, and the Genius of Evil.
Maitreya Fresco. Coloured.



TAOIST

XIII

THE LORD OF THE NORTHERN DIPPER



TABLEAU

THE LORD OF THE NORTHERN DIPPER

A. LEFT-HAND GROUP

1. Chên Wu: Lord of the Northern Dipper.
2. Attendant to Chên Wu in Tantric form.
3. Tortoise and Snake: Symbols of Chên Wu.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

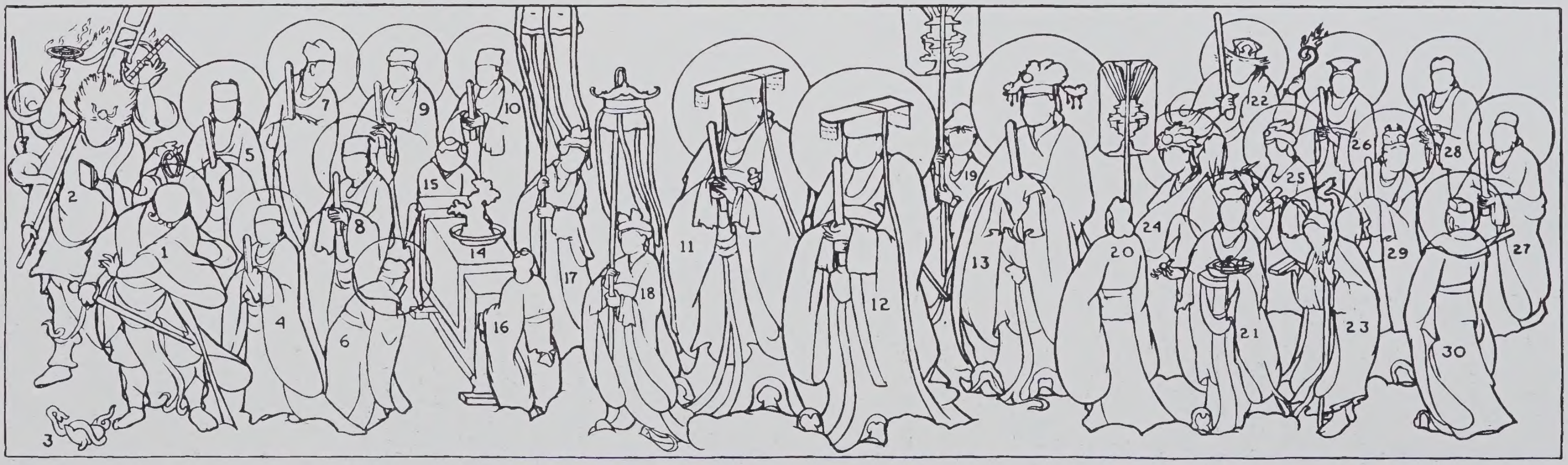
The Spirits of
the Seven Stars
of the
Northern Dipper

B. CENTRAL GROUP

11. Probably T'ien Huang: Emperor of Heaven.
12. Huang Ti: The Yellow Emperor.
13. Hou T'u: Empress of Earth.
14. Movable Altar with coral offering.
15. Attendant: Bearer of Altar.
16. Attendant: Bearer of Altar.
17. Attendant: Bearer of Banner.
18. Attendant: Bearer of Banner.
19. Empress's Attendant: Bearer of Banner.
20. Empress's Attendant: Bearer of Banner.

C. RIGHT-HAND GROUP

21. Chia stem—Wood element—Jupiter.
22. Ping stem—Fire element—Mars.
23. Wu stem—Earth element—Saturn.
24. Kêng stem—Metal element—Venus.
25. Jên stem—Water element—Mercury.
26. Probably Yih stem—Wood element.
27. Probably Ting stem—Fire element.
28. Probably Chi stem—Earth element.
29. Probably Hsin stem—Metal element.
30. Probably Kuei stem—Water element.



LEFT HAND GROUP

1·Chen Wu: Lord of the Northern Dipper
2·Attendant to Chen Wu in Tantri form
3·Tortoise & Snake: Symbols of Chen Wu
4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 } The Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper

CENTRAL GROUP

11·Probably T'ien Huang: Emperor of Heaven
12·Huang Ti: The Yellow Emperor
13·Hou T'u: Empress of Earth
14·Movable Altar with coral offering
15·Attendant: Bearer of Altar
16·Attendant: Bearer of Altar
17·Attendant: Bearer of Banner
18·Attendant: Bearer of Banner
19·Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20·Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner

RIGHT HAND GROUP

21·Chia stem - Wood element - Jupiter
22·Ping stem - Fire element - Mars
23·Wu stem - Earth element - Saturn
24·Kêng stem - Metal element - Venus
25·Jên stem - Water element - Mercury
26·Probably Yih stem - Wood element
27·Probably Ting stem - Fire element
28·Probably Chi stem - Earth element
29·Probably Hsin stem - Metal element
30·Probably Kuei stem - Water element

FIGURE 46. *Key to the Taoist Fresco, Lord of the Northern Dipper.*

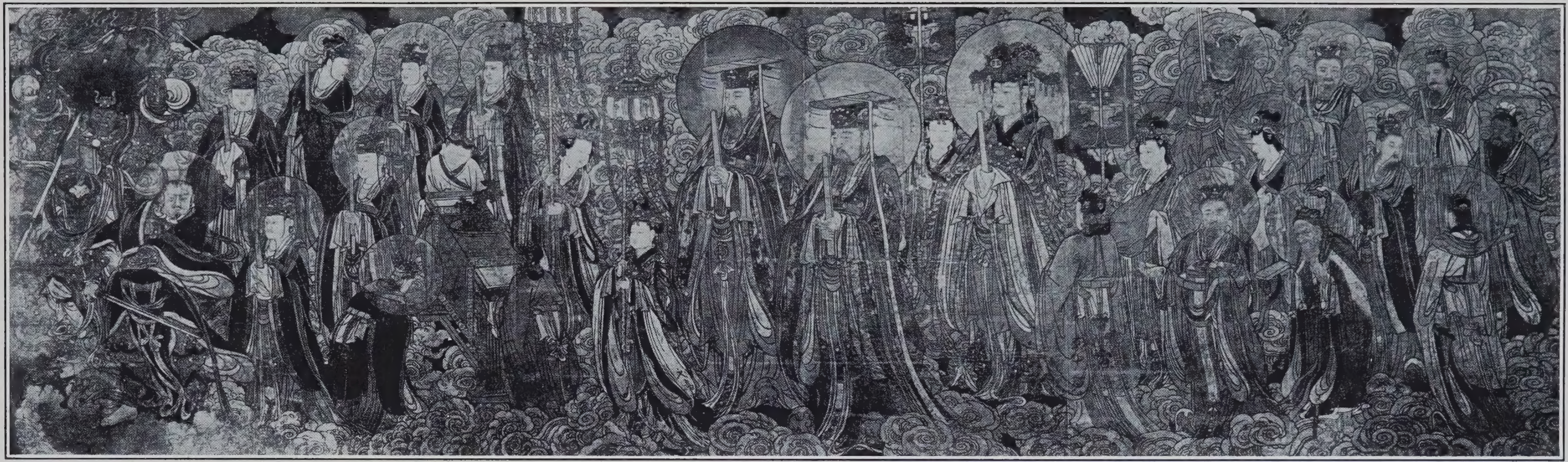


FIGURE 47. *The Lord of the Northern Dipper Fresco.*

XIII

THE LORD OF THE NORTHERN DIPPER

THIS processional fresco is led by the personage after whom the painting is named, that is Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper. It is an arbitrary application of the name to the fresco, yet a suitable one, for the whole composition is framed on the mythological and astrological ideas which centre in the star group of Ursa Major, known to the Chinese for some three thousand years as the Northern Dipper. It is a great procession, swinging along with rhythm and freedom of action, and yet with co-ordination and quiet dignity, under the energetic leadership of Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*Fig. 45*). He is not the most important person in the group, for the three large-sized Rulers in the centre are the great personages of the procession, nevertheless he dominates the painting, and his vigour and determination are evident in every line of his person.

The composition divides itself readily into three parts. The first, or left-hand group, contains Chên Wu, his six-handed attendant in Tantra form, and the Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper. The second, or central group, is the most important, for it contains Three Rulers, accompanied by their attendants, and preceded by an altar carried by two damsels, on which rests a vessel containing the symbol of the Sacred Coral. The third, or right-hand group, is that of ten personages who represent the Ten Celestial Stems, five of whom are the Five Planetary Deities, and the other five their respective counterparts, thus making five pairs of the Five Elements, wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, which constitute the Ten Stems of the Chinese cyclical system of time.

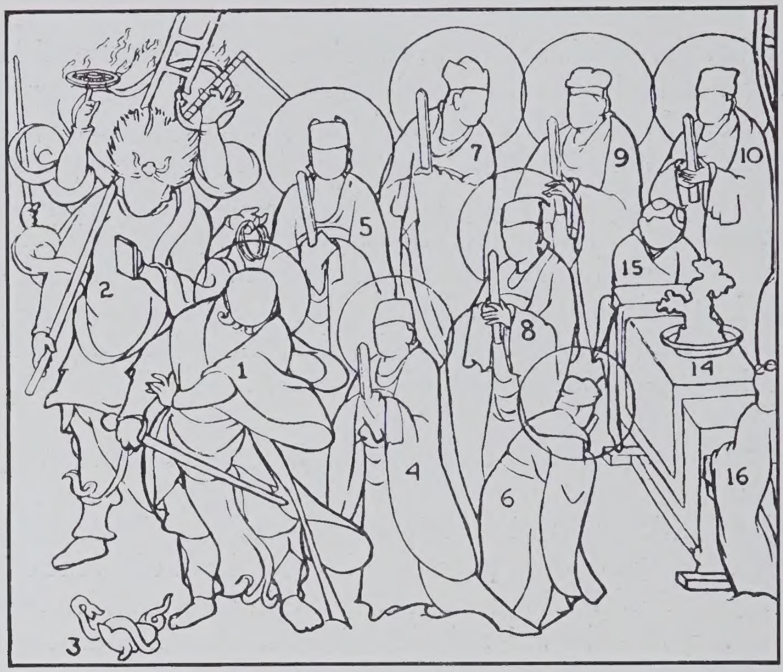
As in the case of the Buddhist Paradise, the procession appears as a vision in the heavens, floating on the clouds, with a background of the dark-blue of night.

The theme of the painting being Taoist there is nothing of purely Buddhistic symbolism to be found in it, except that which had been appropriated by Taoism, and so became common to both religions. This applies to the Tantric attendant to Chên Wu, the Altar with its Sacred Coral, the banners of the Empress of Earth, and the Five Planetary Deities (*cp. Fig. 25*). The painting is typically Chinese in character, done in the generally accepted Wu Tao-tzu style (*cp. Fig. 17*). It is in a good state of preservation, there have been no restorations except where the joins of the plaster sections have been re-touched, and the colours have retained their brilliancy and freshness, though mellowed by the passing of the centuries. As to its size, this fresco is 33 feet 6.5 inches in length, and 10 feet 4 inches high.

The costumes of the civil officials in general appear to be as follows:

(1) a full-length white under-garment; (2) a full-length robe, the upper part and lower part of which may be of different colours; (3) a highly decorated apron, usually red in colour, which seems to hang from under the waist girdle; (4) an embroidered or decorated upper robe or mantle with wide, long-flowing sleeves, which sometimes reaches only to the knee; (5) a waist girdle, probably of leather, which may be plain in front, but which often carries rectangular or circular plaques of a decorative nature; (6) a stole, usually wide at the shoulder, which is sometimes festooned over and around the arms and body, in a manner similar to the stoles of Bodhisattvas; (7) what appear to be protective napkins or cuff-protectors on the upper-robe sleeve ends; (8) a highly ornamented cap, held in place by a hat-pin, and thongs; (9) a Long-life Lock (*ch'ang-ming-so*) suspended as a pectoral by thong around the neck; (10) sometimes an official baton or sceptre; (11) the official tablet (*kuei*, *hu*) held in both hands; (12) shoes, which in most cases are hidden by the long robes; and (13) all are supplied with transparent haloes.

The cap is particularly interesting for no two of them are alike, and yet they are identical in their general characteristics. It is built up on a circular band, and is studded with gems and decorated with gilt bosses and plaques. It is held on the head by a hat-pin which is thrust horizontally from the right side through the knob of hair under the cap, and then extends on the other side. In



LEFT HAND GROUP

1· Chen Wu: Lord of the Northern Dipper
2· Attendant to Chen Wu in Tantri form
3· Tortoise & Snake: Symbols of Chen Wu

4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper

FIGURE 48

Key to the Left-hand Group of the Northern Dipper.

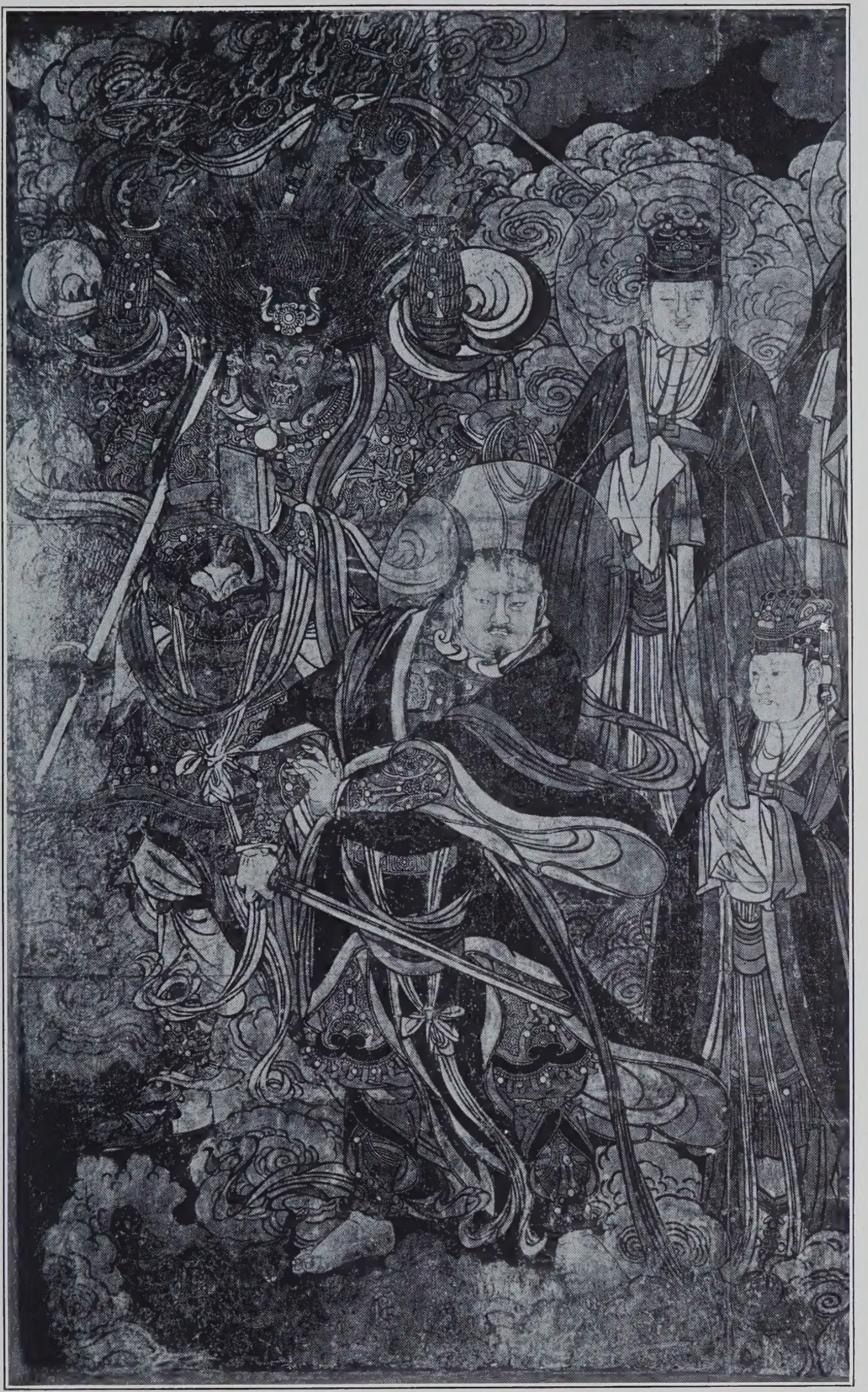


FIGURE 49

The Left-hand Group (1) of the Northern Dipper.

addition a pair of thongs are attached to the rim at a point forward from the ears, which allows the thongs to be tied under the chin. Some of these thongs were tied (*chap.* XIII*: 5*) and others were hanging loose (*chap.* XIII*: 8*). There was another tie for the cap which must have been of ceremonial significance. It is a long thong, probably some ten feet or more in length, which passed loosely over the front rim of the cap, then over the hat-pin which protruded on either side, and down over the shoulders and the sides of the body, finally being looped up over the arms. Where this cord passed behind the ear, it threaded a barrel-shaped cylinder, probably of amber, or possibly ivory, which was evidently intended to protect the ear from cutting by the cord. The Empress and Emperors of this fresco (*chap.* XIII*: 11, 12, and 13*) carry similar long head-dress thongs and ear-protectors, but the latter are more decorative than those of the Presidents of the Seven Stars. The Ten Stems do not carry ear-protectors, nor do the attendants of this fresco.

The Long-life Lock (*ch'ang-ming-so*) as the name implies is a symbol and amulet of longevity and is suspended on the breast by a thong. It is carried by most of the figures on both Taoist frescoes. It is found on Sung paintings (*Bulletin, Museum of Fine Arts; Boston, October 1937, p. 65: 9*), on wooden temple figures of Chin and early Yüan (*Fig. 14*), and on illustrations of Yüan Dynasty books (*Hsiao Ching;* A.D. *1308, reprint by Ch'ên Hang, Peking, 1938*). It was very popular during the Ming Dynasty, while it is commonly worn by children today, as a charm protecting from dangers.

The tablet carried by civil officials and by royalty is a symbol of official rank and goes back to very early days. It is a narrow strip of ivory or jade, slightly tapering to one end, the corners of which are slightly rounded or pointed. It is this smaller end which is always held uppermost. Ceremonially the object should be held in both hands, which should be covered. There are two names for the object, that of *kuei*, which possibly refers to the jade or stone types which seem to be mainly for ceremonial use; and that of *hu* which is commonly applied to ivory, wooden, or bamboo tablets. These tablets were held before the breast by courtiers at audiences, even down to the Ming Dynasty. They are said to have been used for taking notes, either those of matters to be reported to the Emperor, or to record the words of the Emperor. Such tablets, with the records still on them, were kept as heirlooms in the families of those officials who had used them (*cp. Shosoin; Harada, p. 21*).

The sceptre or baton carried by each of the three Emperors is fastened in their girdle under the left arm, and appears to be from two to three feet long. The handle is studded with gems, and the object itself obviously was of ceremonial significance only. Besides the Emperors only three other figures appear to carry such sceptres, and they are among the Presidents of the Heavens, which follow immediately after the Lord of the Southern Dipper.

A. Left-Hand Group

1. Chên Wu, the Lord of the Northern Dipper. This short, stout, and competent-looking warrior who leads the procession is known by many names. His most imposing name is the First Ruler of the Sombre Heavens (*Hsüan T'ien Shang Ti*). Other names are the True Warrior (*Chên Wu*), the Protector of Goodness and True Master of the North Pole (*Pei-chi Yu-shêng Chên-chün*), the Sombre King (*Hsüan Wang*), and the Sombre Warrior (*Hsüan Wu*). In the year 1012 the use of the character *hsüan*, in the name of an ancestor of the Emperor Chên Tsung, necessitated the taboo of that character in ordinary use, and so the name Hsüan Wu was changed to Chên Wu. There are other names he is known by, and in the Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1416) a temple in his honour was built at Peking, where he was worshipped under the title of Veritable Saintly and Helpful Master of the Pole Star. Later generations called him True Master (*Chên Chün*), placing at the feet of his image a tortoise and serpent.

His origin is wrapt in a fog of myth and legend. He is said to have been an incarnation of the Taoist god who was the First Principle (*Yüan-shih T'ien-tsun*), and a patriarch of the Third Heaven descended to earth and taught him the wonderful doctrine, bestowing on him a magic sword. On a high peak of Mount T'ai-ho he practised for forty-two years the exercises which brought him the ability to float in the air, and to perform feats which made him invincible. The First Principle hearing of this invited him to ascend to the celestial regions. This was in the time of Shou, the last King of the Shang Dynasty (*d.* 1122 B.C.), when the demon-kings were ravishing the universe. So Hsüan T'ien was despatched to earth at the head of the twelve great chiefs of the celestial legions. He came with dishevelled hair, bare-footed, girdled with a gold cuirass, clothed in a black mantle, carrying his magic sword, and hoisting a dark banner on which was a plotting of the Northern Dipper. He joined battle with the king of the demons at the Grotto of Darkness (*Tung-yin*), and capturing him and his demon hordes he threw them into the Feng-tu abyss, the entrance to the nether regions in Ssu-ch'uan. In the conflict two of the marshals of the demon-king were transformed into a grey tortoise and a huge serpent in order to deceive Hsüan T'ien, but all to no avail,—and since then the tortoise and snake have been associated with the Lord of the Northern Dipper (*Fig. 45*). In the official History of the Sung Dynasty (*Sung-shih, bk. 463, p. 9*) there is a curious entry recording the appearance of Hsüan T'ien Shang Ti, in a vision to the Emperor Hui Tsung (A.D. 1101-1126) of the Sung Dynasty. The Emperor who was an artist and a scholar, became a zealous adherent of Taoism, and was greatly influenced by the Taoist Lin Ling-su (*see chap.* V).

As the story goes, the Emperor one day told Lin that he would like to see Chên Wu's sacred person. "To obtain this favour," said Lin, "Your Majesty must summon to the palace along with me the Master of Heaven" (*T'ien Shih*—the pontiff of Taoism). This was consequently done, and

> at the moment when these two were performing their rites at midnight, the sky darkened. Lightning suddenly rent the skies, the thunder rolled, and in a blaze of light there dropped at the threshold of the palace a grey tortoise and a serpent. The Emperor prostrated himself, then offered incense and prayed "I desire to see Chên Wu, if he but deign to reveal himself." The thunder crashed—the tortoise and serpent vanished—and a huge foot appeared on the threshold. The Emperor made a second prostration, and offered incense, begging Chên Wu to condescend to show himself more manifestly. That moment he saw standing before him the huge figure of a man some ten feet high; his face was stern and striking; his hair was unbound; under his

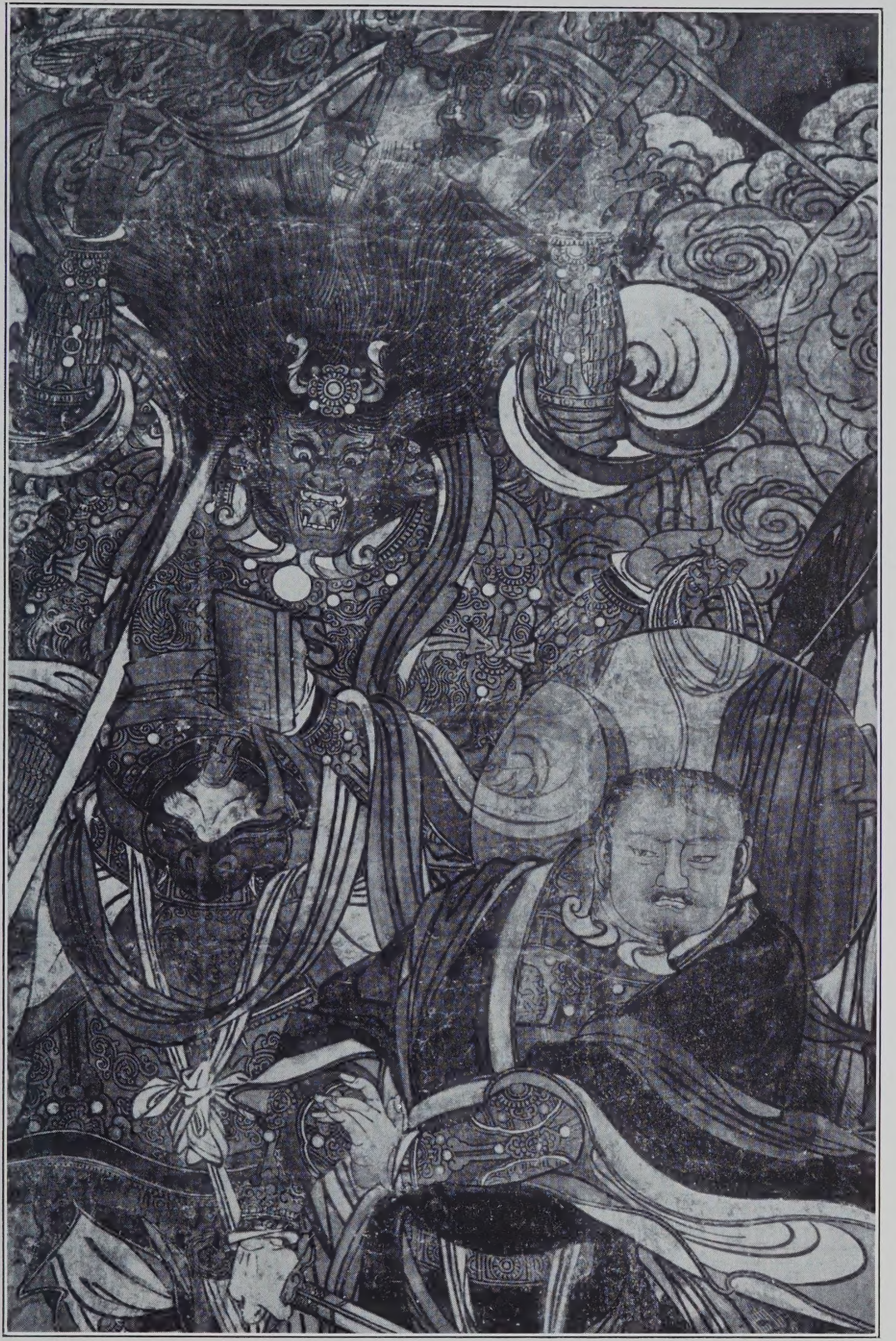


FIGURE 50

Detail from Left-hand Group of the Northern Dipper.

black mantle which had sleeves sweeping to the ground, he wore a breastplate of gold and a belt set with jewels; his hand brandished a sword; his feet were bare, and round his head there shone a halo of light, while the ends of his sash floated in the breeze. He remained long enough for the Emperor to sketch him and then vanished [*cp. Chinese Superstitions; Doré, vol.* IX, *pp. 20-26*].

The description of Chên Wu as given in the Sung History is a picture of Chên Wu of the Toronto fresco (*Fig. 45*). The armour of this Sombre Warrior is particularly interesting, because it is identical with that of the warriors of the ninth-century Tun-huang paintings, with additional interest from the fact that his arm-guards and greaves are surfaced in a very naturalistic manner to simulate shagreen (*see chap.* XI).

His coat-of-mail is of the diaper-design of three-armed stars, yellow in colour, and it is trimmed with green and gem-studded decoration. The under-tunic is white, the over-mantle is black with a green-lined red border, while the long floating stole is green. At the knees are what appear to be red trousers with black edging, fastened below the knee with a decorative garter. The greaves and arm-guards are of similar design and colour, and are of blue shagreen, decorated in applique with discs and gems. At the ankles are petalled ruffs, but his feet are bare. Behind his head is a transparent halo, he is bareheaded and his hair is flowing wildly, he wears a yellow-plaqued belt at the hip, and a plain grey belt at the waist, while his R. hand grasps a drawn straight-edged sword, with the index finger hooked over the cross-bar of the guard (*Fig. 45*).

2. The attendant to Chên Wu is probably a Tantric form of Vaiśravana (*To Wên*), the Guardian of the North, and the double-halberd he carries, with the long streamer attached to it, is probably the "Banner of Victory." He is a fierce-looking warrior, with three faces and six arms. His hair flares out fan-shape like the hairs of a thick brush, and flames of fire curl up from the ends. He is in full mail-armour, and carries an object of symbolic significance in each of his six hands. His upper right hand holds on the tip of his forefinger a whirling wheel (*cakra*) from which flames ascend; his central right hand holds a drawn sword pointed upwards; and the lower right hand holds a double-headed halberd resting across the right shoulder. His upper left hand holds a carpenter's square, one arm of which is graduated into ten inches to form a carpenter's foot-rule; the central left hand holds a coiled lasso; and the lower

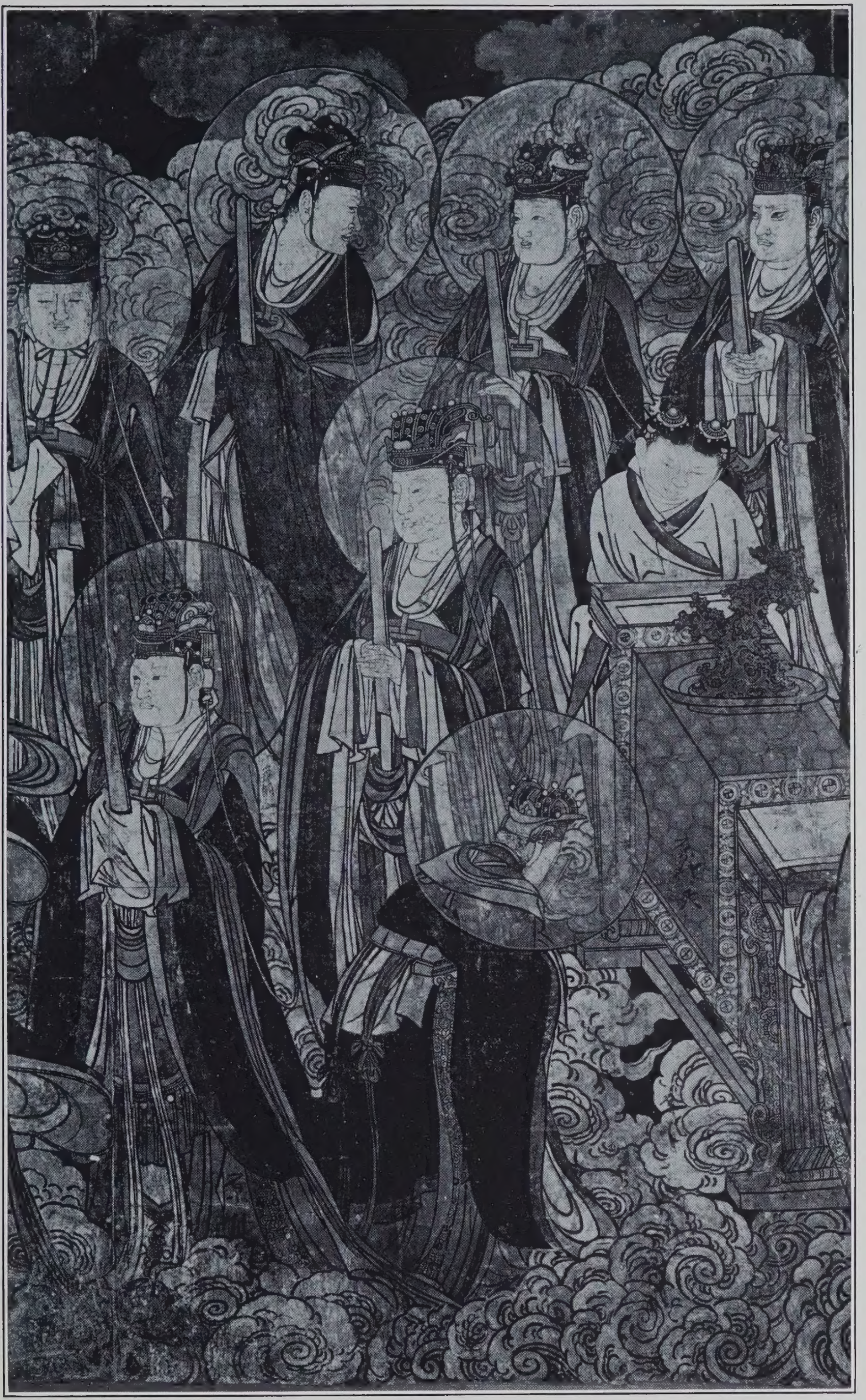


FIGURE 51

The Left-hand Group (2) of the Northern Dipper.

left hand holds a seal with a pair of lucky characters carved on it. This character (*fu*) is one of the twelve ornaments on the robes of an Emperor (*Fig. 24*). (*See chap.* XI *for Symbols.*)

This Tantra attendant has a fiery red face with wide-open mouth and fanged teeth. Over his forehead is an ornament with two up-turned horns, and on each side of the head, where the ears should be, is a smaller red-faced demon head. His hair flares out, and from the ends are curling flames of fire. His coat-of-mail appears to be of leather elaborately decorated with applique designs, and with oblong armour plates on the shoulders. He has a sporran-like monster-mask at the waist, with a red belt above it, and another yellow-plaque belt below it. All six arms have ruffs of feathers at the elbow, with arm-guards of oblong plates. His leg-greave has a shagreen decoration, and blue ruff is at the ankle. He wears shoes with white heel-cap, red toe-cap, a red tie under the instep, and a decorative shield over the instep. His robe under the coat-of-mail is blue, his under-tunic is white, while his knees are swathed in white drapery which is fastened with knee-garters. His stole, which is green with a yellow lining, is festooned about his body. A streamer is attached to the head of his halberd, which makes it appear to be a "Banner of Victory" of Vaiśravana. His straight-edged sword, held vertically in his centre R. hand, is hardly noticeable by the edge of the fresco. The tip of his halberd, which is two-pronged, is also not discernible.

3. The tortoise and snake are emblems associated with Chên Wu. As pointed out above they are said to have been transformations of two marshals who in conflict with Chên Wu changed themselves into a grey tortoise and a huge snake respectively, but were finally conquered, and so are usually depicted at or under the foot of Chên Wu.

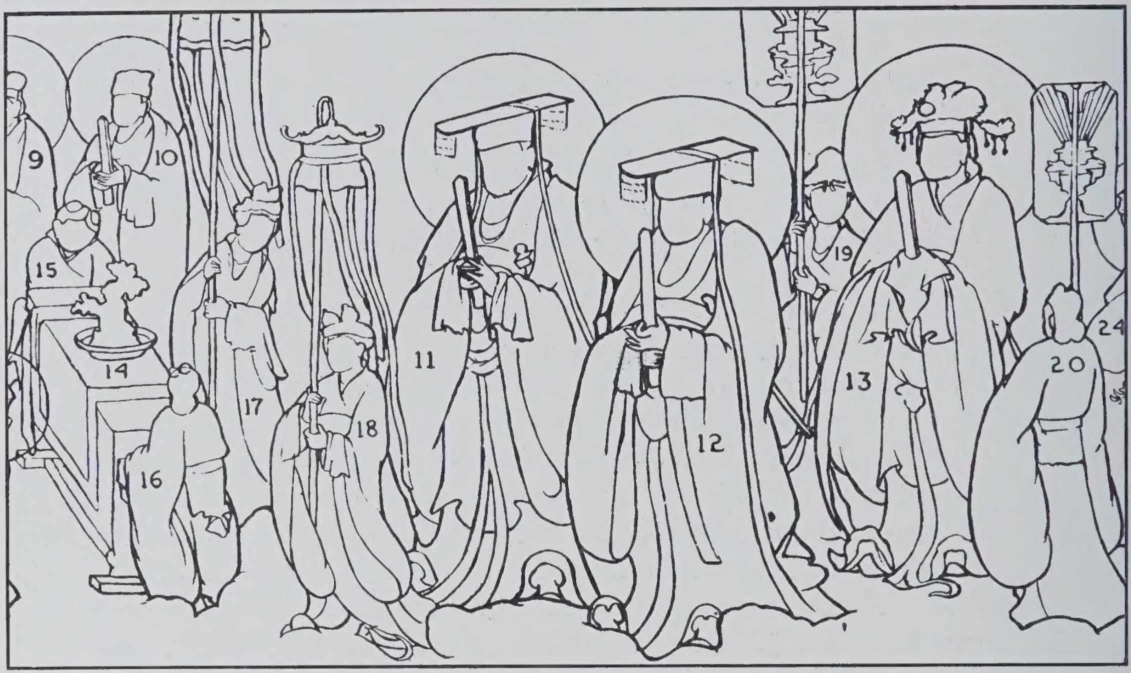
4-10. The Spirits of the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper. Each has his distinctive Chinese name (*Chinese Reader's Manual; Mayers, Shanghai, 1924, p. 352*), and a particular function in the affairs of men. As already pointed out (*chap.* X) the fourth, fifth, and sixth stars, counting from the star nearest to Polaris, are the stars which govern respectively long life, happiness, and plenty. They are dressed in the full flowing robes of Chinese civil officials of ancient times, and they all have transparent head haloes and carry official tablets, but there is no distinguishing feature by which any one of them might be associated with a particular star.

These seven figures all have the same light-coloured complexion of face, and they do not carry a sceptre or baton, in which respects they differ from the nine figures at the head of the procession of the Southern Dipper. The mantles of this group are all dark in colour, characteristic of the northern regions, but some have coloured edgings. Their robes and stoles are of different colours, but otherwise their costumes are similar in kind and design.

B. *Central Group*

This group includes three important personages; two are Emperors and one is an Empress. They are preceded by two damsels carrying an altar upon which rests a platter containing a Sacred Coral tree. This altar and its offering are in honour of this important trio of dignitaries. Immediately following the altar and preceding the Emperors are two beautifully-gowned girls, each carrying a banner with streamers, sometimes spoken of as a ceremonial umbrella. Then come the Emperors followed by the Empress of Earth. The Empress is attended by two girls bearing banners of a rectangular shape, depicting a sea in which is an island, and on the island is set a palace which radiates rays of light, while the red sun and white moon are seen in the sky on either side (*cp. Fig. 18*).

The three regal figures are obviously a trinity, but it is difficult to determine which they are except in the case of the Empress (*chap.* XIII*: 13*). She has in her head-dress a disc on which are three broken lines, which is the Fu Hsi Eight Diagram (*Pa Kua*) symbol for earth (*k'un*), so she may with certainty be accepted as the Empress of Earth (*Hou T'u*). The other two, by process of reasoning, and comparison with other mythological personages, have been accepted tentatively as the Emperor of Heaven (*T'ien Huang*) in the case of one (*chap.* XIII*: 11*), and in the case of the other (*chap.* XIII*: 12*) as the Yellow Emperor (*Huang Ti*). Additional evidence of the probability of these designations is afforded by a Sung painting which bears a cartouche in which is written the caption "Portraits of the Emperor of Heaven, Empress of Earth (*T'u*), and Earthly (*Ti*) Emperor" (*T'ien Huang*, *Hou T'u*, *Ti Huang Hsiang*). This painting (*Figs. 17 and 18*) depicts two Emperors and one Empress in a setting, dress, and style identical with those of the fresco (*Pageant of Chinese Painting; Ohtsuka-*



CENTRAL GROUP

11·Probably T'ien Huang: Emperor of Heaven
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14·Movable Altar with coral offering
15·Attendant : Bearer of Altar
16·Attendant : Bearer of Altar
17·Attendant : Bearer of Banner
18·Attendant : Bearer of Banner
19·Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20·Empress' Attendant: Bearer of Banner

FIGURE 52

Key to the Central Group of the Northern Dipper.

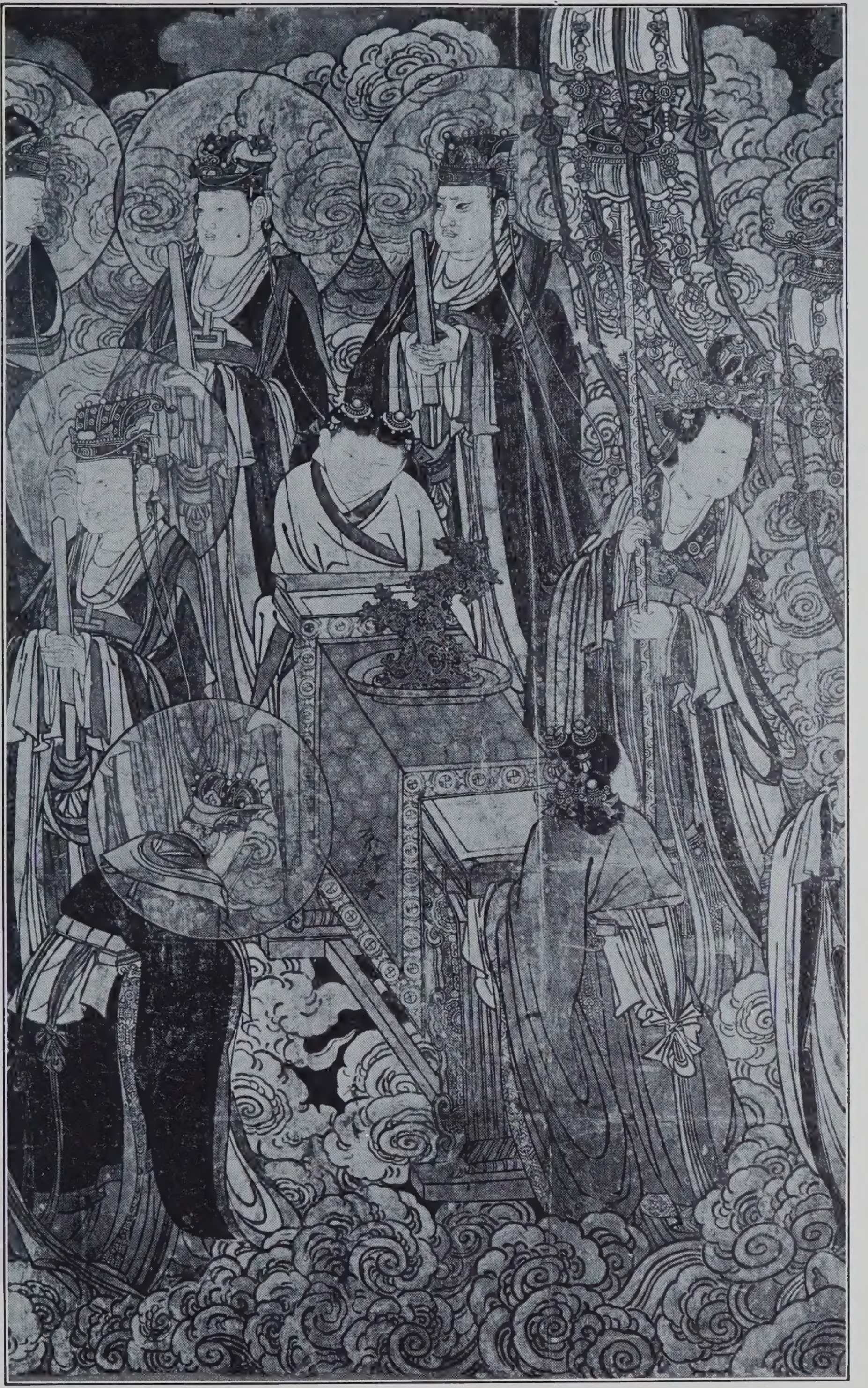


FIGURE 53

Altar of the Coral Symbol of the Northern Dipper.

Kohgeisha, Tokyo, 1936, Pl. 211). The Japanese caption by the side of this painting states it to be a drawing of "heavenly spirits and earthly deities," made in the style of Wu Tao-tzu, and at the bottom attributes it to an unknown Sung painter, and calls it "Painting of the Emperor of Heaven and the Empress of Earth."

Although Chinese mythology speaks of thirteen Heavenly Emperors (*T'ien Huang*), all brothers, yet in paintings one figure is usually given as symbolic of the group. In the same manner there were eleven Earthly Emperors (*Ti Huang*), and nine Human Emperors (*Jên Huang*). The one who stands out above all others as the founder of the Chinese polity and civilization, is the Yellow Emperor (*Huang Ti*). Amongst many inventions and institutions, he is credited with correcting the calendar, and with introducing the cyclical system. As the cycle is intimately involved in the lay-out of the fresco compositions, it is but reasonable to expect that the author of the cycle would be included in the group of imperial personages. So in this group we assume the three regal individuals to be T'ien Huang, Huang Ti, and Hou T'u (*cp. History of the Three Emperors in Ancient China; Ku Chieh-kang and Yang Hsien-kuei, Harvard-Yenching, 1936*).

11. T'ien~~g~~ Huang, the Emperor of Heaven. The head of the family of fabulous sovereigns, who succeeded P'an Ku the first created being, and who began the process of developing the universe out of chaos.

He wears a white under-tunic, a long robe of pea-green colour, and an over-mantle of blue with a floral border, fastened under the R. arm in kimona-style. Over this is a green stole with yellow lining. Over the front of the robe, hanging down from a red belt at the waist, is a red apron-like garment, down the centre of which are two streamers of a decorative sash, with a ring and knot fastening in the middle. The sleeves of his mantle are wide and voluminous, reaching below the knees, and over the sleeve ends there are the usual green cuff-protectors. The mantle and robe together are decorated with the Twelve Ornaments (*Fig. 24*).

In the Book of History (*bk.* IV, *Yi and Chi, chap.* I: *4. Cp. Legge's translation*), the Emperor Shun (2317-2208 B.C.) made this statement to his Minister Yü, "I wish to see the emblematic figures of the ancients,—the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the dragons, and the pheasants, which are depicted

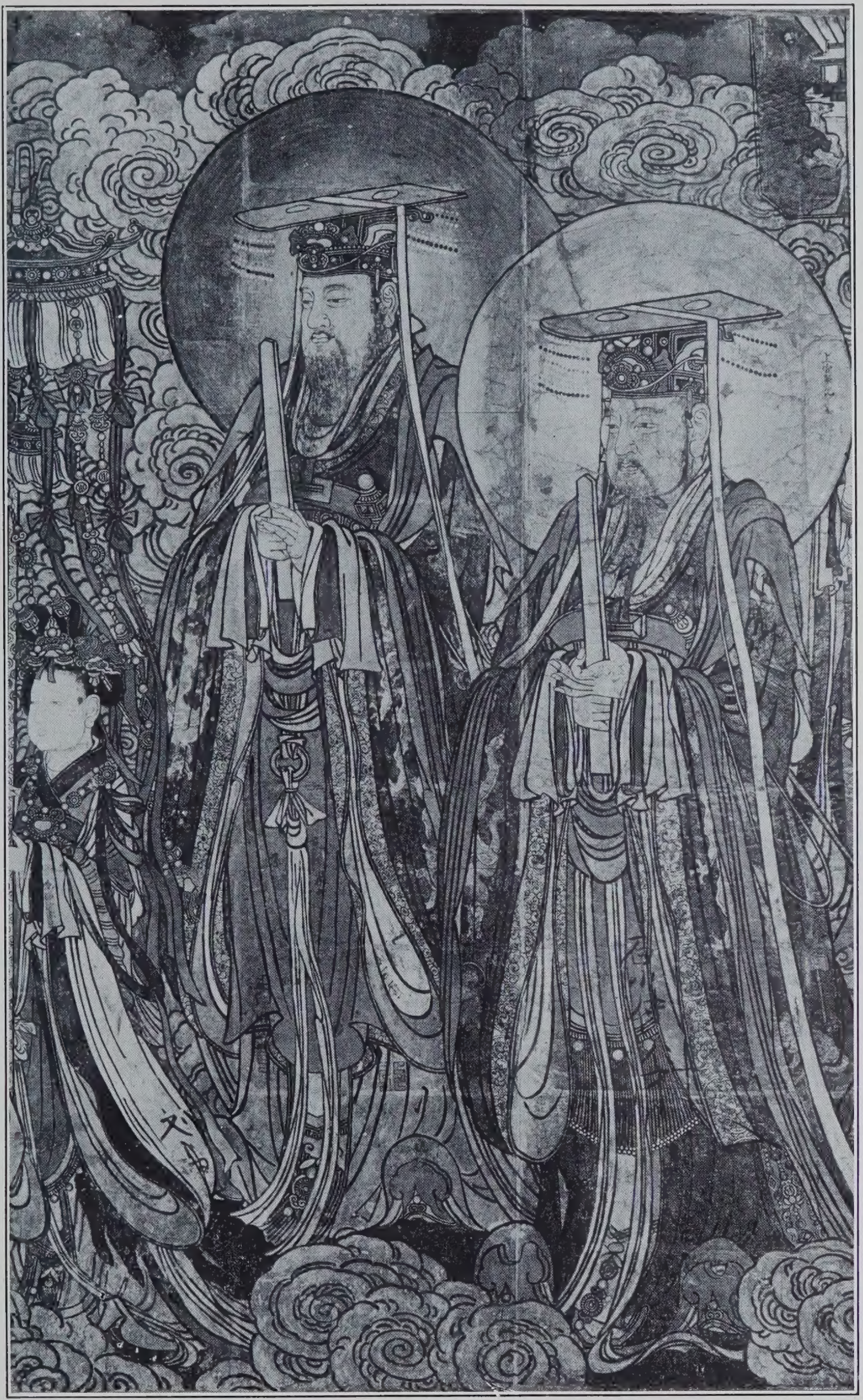


FIGURE 54

T'ien Huang and Huang Ti of the Northern Dipper.

(on the upper mantle); the libation-cups, the pond-weed, the fire, the rice, the axe, the talisman, which are embroidered (on the lower robe)."

The ceremonial robes of the Emperor had all these twelve figures depicted or embroidered on them, emblematic of various attributes, but now for the most part unknown. The highest nobles were restricted from the use of the first three—the sun, moon, and stars—and the other ranks of officials in descending order were decreasingly restricted as to the number of emblems they could use. There were five sets of official robes, one set to each of five grades, and the main difference was in the number of emblems allowed to the particular grade. The first numbers were of the highest rank, gradually decreasing in grade to the twelfth, the talisman, which was the lowest in the scale and the lowest on the garments (*Fig. 24*).

On the robe of the Emperor of Heaven two talisman emblems are seen at the bottom, one on each side, just above the shoes (*Fig. 54*). On the mantle the stars are seen near the shoulder, but the sun and moon are not discernible. The mountains, dragons, and pheasants are clearly seen, and also the flames of fire, and the tiger of one of the libation cups. The latter are usually depicted with a tiger on or inside one, and a monkey on or inside the other. In the case of both the frescoes the cups themselves are not drawn, but only the tiger and the monkey. It is not clear what these two animals are intended to signify, but they may possibly refer to two kinds of libation wine, one associated with the strength and ferocity of the tiger, and the other associated with the cleverness and agility of the monkey. The other emblems—rice, pond-weed, and axe—are not seen on the mantle, but they are probably on the robe below, hidden in the folds of drapery.

The cap of the Emperor is similar to that of the civil officials of the fresco, except that it has a mortar-board top, with a tie passing over it and down the sides of the body to the ground. The top of the mortar-board has a depiction of a red sun at one end and a white moon at the other; and twelve strings of beads, ten in each string and probably of five colours, hang down from the board, front and back.

The cap is held on the head by a cap-pin thrust through the sides, and by leather thongs which are tied under the chin. A long cord also passes over the front of the cap, over the ends of the pin and down behind the ears to the sides of the body, where it is looped over the arms. Behind the ears it passes through a barrel-shaped object which protects the ear from abrasion by the cord. On his breast he wears a pectoral of "Long-life Lock" design, green in colour, like that of the civil officials, and also carries the usual green tablet, but the hands are not covered.

Under his left arm may be seen the head of a sceptre, square in shape and of open-work, for the red of the belt may be seen through it, and its top is surmounted by a round green jade knob (*cp. Fig. 55*).

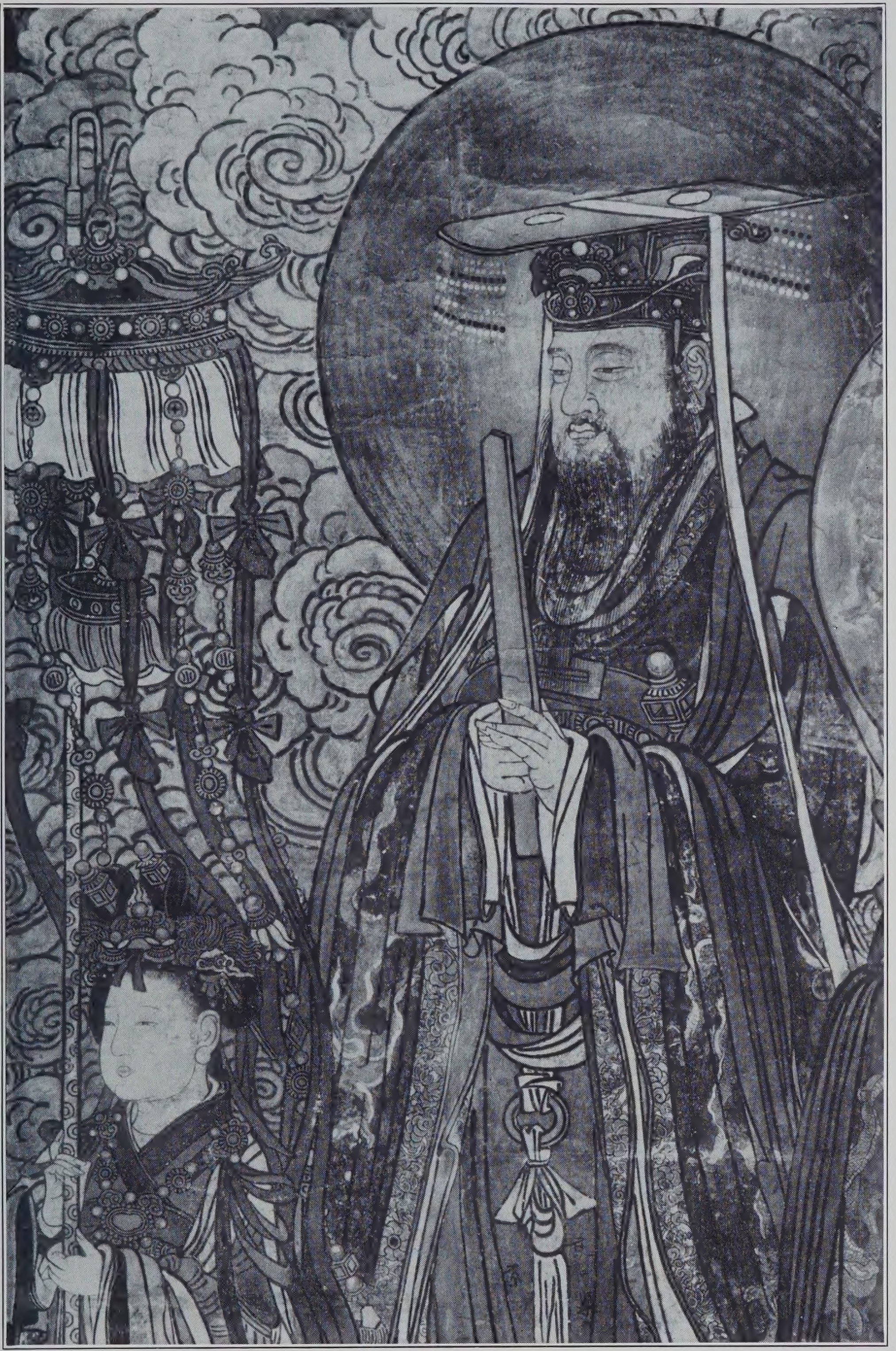


FIGURE 55

Detail from Central Group of the Northern Dipper.

His shoes have red up-turned tips, and under the tips a small piece of decoration is seen, but most of the shoes is hidden under the robes.

12. Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor. He is said to have invented wheeled vehicles, armour, ships, pottery, etc., and to have regulated the sacrificial and religious ceremonies. He applied the science of astronomy to chronological reckoning, and introduced a calendar and the cycle, while he is credited with originating most of the institutions which form the background of Chinese social, political, and religious life. He is usually worshipped as the God of Architecture.

This Emperor is in robes identical with the previous one, the difference being only in the colours of the robes and in small details. The red apron of this Emperor has a wide fringe at the bottom, and his stole is red lined with green. As to the Twelve Ornaments, his robe has at the bottom the talisman and axe emblems, and on his mantle the other emblems such as are seen on the robes of the previous Emperor, with the addition possibly of the sun. His sceptre under his left arm is not square at the head, but round, and its whole length would appear to be about two feet. Both Emperors are full-bearded.

13. Hou T'u, the Empress of Earth. She is depicted in female form because the earth is *yin* or female, in apposition to heaven which is *yang* or male. Hou T'u is known as the Spirit of the Earth (*T'u Shên*), the patron deity of the soil (*Shê*), the Spirit of Humanity (*Jên Shên*), the Mother of the Earth (*Hou T'u Niang Niang*), and many other names. Sacrifices to Earth were officially begun in 113 B.C. when the Emperor Wu Ti offered sacrifices to Hou T'u in the very area from which these frescoes came, the region of the Fên River. Doubtless sacrifices to Earth were made long before this, for they had to do with agriculture, and seasonal harvests.

This Empress wears a white inner garment; a robe of light colour, with wide green fringe at the bottom; a white mantle with brown edging and floral border in which phoenixes are prominent, and with green lining to the border. She has the usual cuff-protectors, and the wide full sleeves of her mantle have an edging of blue feathers (*cp. Fig. 72*). She wears a red frontal drape similar to an apron, with sash ties down the front, and carries the official tablet in both hands, which are covered with white drapery. Her stole is of pea-green colour with dark-green centre, and lined with a lighter green. Her head-dress is built up of green, gold, and red, with bird forms, and in the centre is a round white disc with the Pa-kua emblem of the three broken lines—*k'un*, which

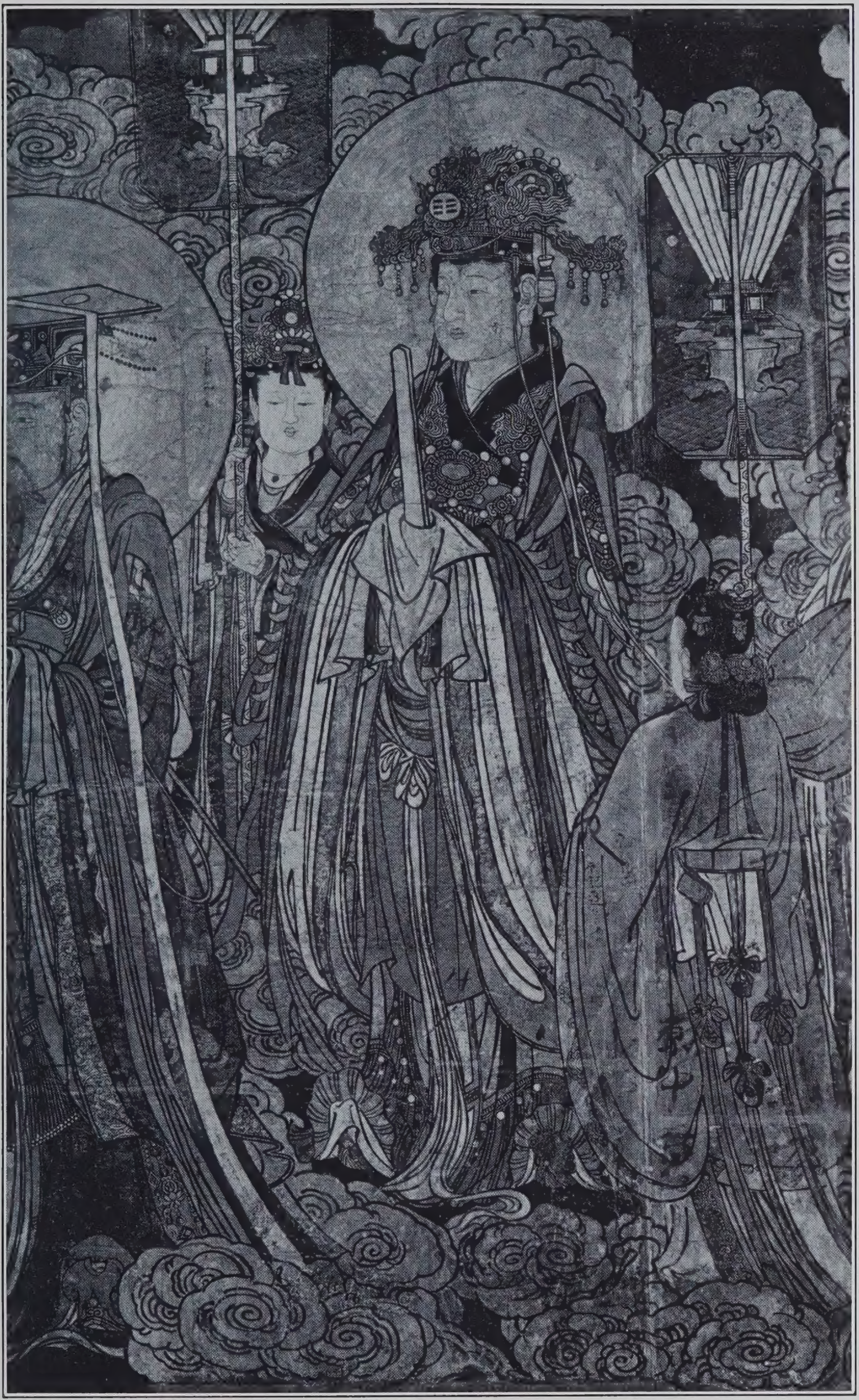


FIGURE 56

The Empress of Earth of the Northern Dipper.

represents "earth." A jewelled pin is thrust through the head-dress, around which a cord is passed to come behind the ears through ear-protectors, falling down by the sides of the body, and then is looped over the arms. In addition leather thongs are attached in front of the ears for the purpose of tying under the chin, but the ends are allowed to hang loose. The shoes are hidden under drapery at the bottom of the robe, but what is seen shows that the up-turned toes were of bird or fowl-head design. Across the breast there is a lunar-shaped pectoral of gold and jade, which may be part of an ornamental system similar to that of the Bodhisattvas of the Maitreya fresco.

14. The Movable Altar with Coral Offering. The altar itself is well made of wood which is stained green, and the surface appears to be inlaid with white marble. The altar-frontal is placed crosswise over the centre of the altar, in the manner shown in the Tun-huang paintings. The platter on the altar is mottled, and may well be intended to represent the mottled and glazed pottery so characteristic of the T'ang period. The Naga-tree or sacred coral is symbolic of the "Treasures of the Nagas," and is here significant of the honour being done to the royal personages.

The altar-frontal is bright red, with small floral sprays, checkered in regular order by a delicate blue linear floral design. The frontal is rectangular in shape, and has a border of varied green medallion design on a polychrome background.

15. A female attendant, bearer of the altar.

This young damsel wears a white under-tunic, and a plain white over-robe with blue border, which is crossed over and fastened under the L. arm. Her hair is parted in the middle, and is probably arranged in a double coil behind. The two rosette-shaped ornaments in the hair are the ends of decorative hair-pins, with jade tips. Her hands by which she holds the altar, are covered with the sleeve ends of her robe.

16. A female attendant, bearer of the altar.

This other altar-bearer is also probably a young girl, for her hair is arranged in a style similar to that of her companion.

Her robe is doubtless the same shape, but it is seen from the back. It is light green in colour, with a decorative polychrome border, and has panels of red and green hanging from the side. She wears a yellow belt at the waist, which has a white kerchief inserted under it behind, from which hang down two ends of a white sash which is tied in a bow at the centre.

17. A female attendant, a beautiful well-dressed maid who carries a ceremonial umbrella, or canopied banner, with streamers.

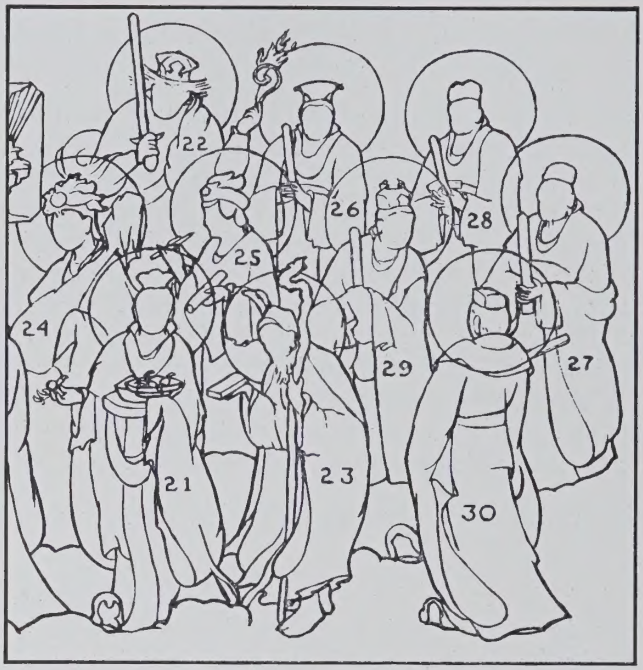
She wears a white under-tunic, a green robe with decorative border, and a white over-mantle with floral border. She has two waist girdles, a red one above, and a green one with square plaques below. Her stole is white, and underneath it is a sort of green and gold corslet which may be the upper part of a system of ornaments which in the case of the Bodhisattvas is suspended over the front of the robes. Connected with this decorative harness are dark-coloured streamers which flow down from the shoulder. At her wrists are green cuff-protectors, and round the wide sleeve of the mantle, or probably at the elbow, there is a pointed fringe of feather decoration (*cp. Figs. 61 and 72*). Over the front of her robe she wears a red apron-like garment, with wide green fringe at the bottom. She carries, on a decorated staff, a ceremonial umbrella, the dominant colours of which are white, red, and green.

18. A female attendant, bearer of canopied banner similar to the latter.

She is robed like her companion, but the colours are different. Her robe is white, with a red apron or flap in front, and her over-mantle is also white, with a floral border lined with green. She wears a red corslet, elaborately decorated with green ornaments, which is fastened across the breast and under the L. arm; and from the shoulder there hang down slender streamers of a drab colour lined with light green.

19. Female attendant to the Empress, bearer of a "Paradise" banner. Without much exaggeration this banner could be considered as suggesting a small "Paradise of Kuan-yin"—the palace which radiates rays of light representing Kuan-yin who must be supposed to be within her palace, and Kuan-yin's peculiar symbols, the sun and the moon, which are placed in the heavens on either side of the palace. On the other hand since this is a Taoist fresco, the banner probably gives a picture of a Taoist heaven or retreat, the "Island of the Blest" usually associated with Lao-tzu (*cp. Fig. 70*).

On banners with similar pictures from Tun-huang, the sun sometimes has a red bird—the three-legged solar crow—within its circle; and the moon has a hare standing under a tree, and pounding a pestle in a mortar (*cp. Fig. 24*). In the Sung Dynasty painting of the Three Emperors (*Figs. 17* and *18*), there is a banner behind the figure of the Empress of Earth, which has the same picture as



RIGHT HAND GROUP

21·Chia stem-Wood element-Jupiter
22·Ping stem-Fire element - Mars
23·Wu stem-Earth element-Saturn
24·Kêng stem-Metal element-Venus
25·Jên stem-Water element-Mercury
26·Probably Yih stem-Wood element
27·Probably Ting stem-Fire element
28·Probably Chi stem-Earth element
29·Probably Hsin stem-Metal element
30·Probably Kuei stem-Water element

FIGURE 57

Key to the Right-hand Group of the Northern Dipper.

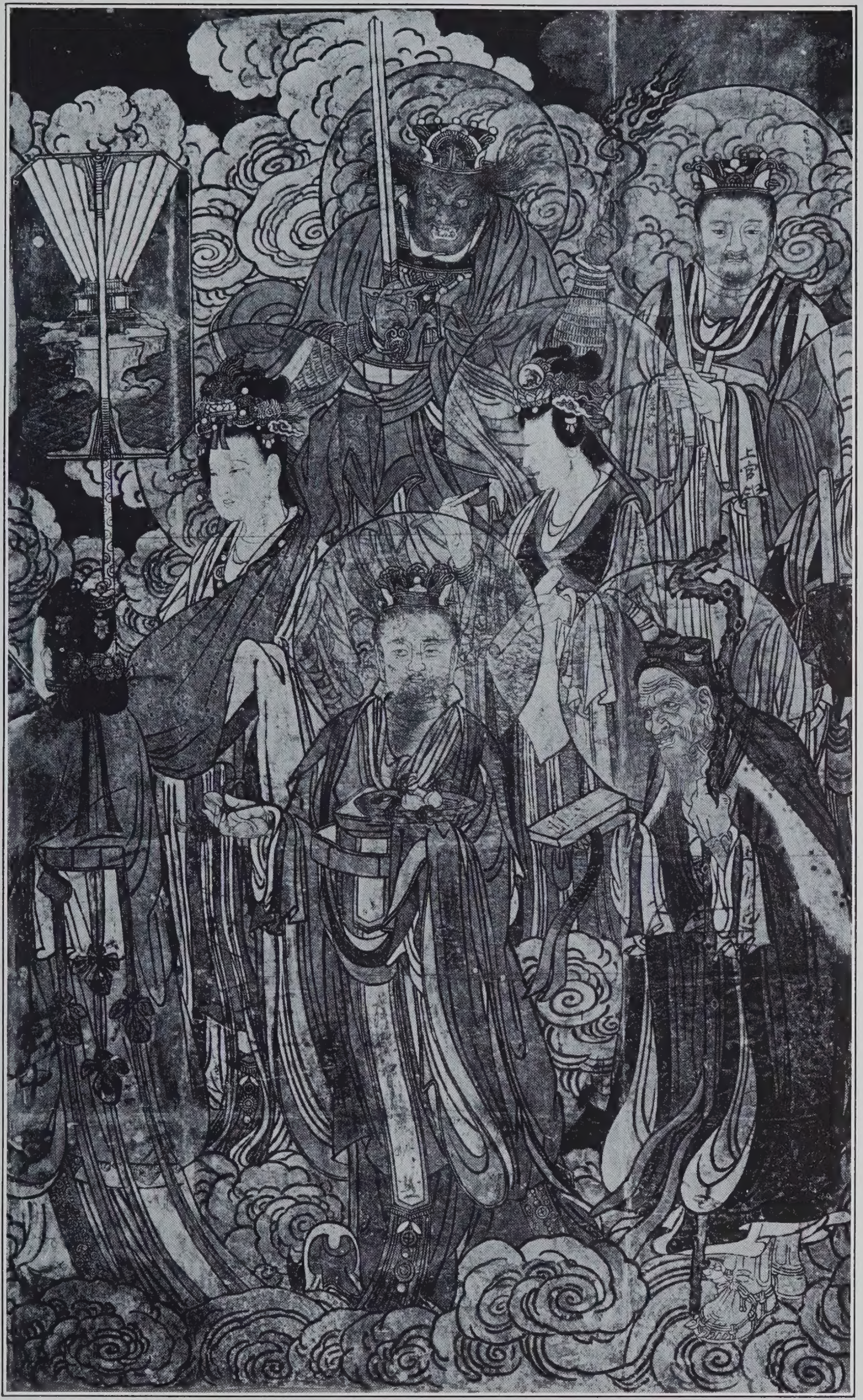


FIGURE 58

The Five Planetary Deities of the Northern Dipper.

this, but since it is a painting on silk more detail is given. In the two circles there are written the characters for sun (*jih*) and moon (*yüeh*) respectively; and in the sky below them are depicted the star groups of the Southern Dipper and the Northern Dipper, and above the palace two groups of the "Three Stars."

The attendant wears a white under-tunic, green over-mantle with dark border, simple ring bracelets, and the usual green cuff-protectors. The banner she carries is rectangular in form with clipped corners, and the staff is continuous through the centre to the top of the banner. The pole is white, decorated with green circles. On the banner is depicted a sea, in which is an island, on which stands a palace. From this palace emanate white rays which radiate fan-shape into the heavens. In the sky to the right is the red sun, and to the left the white moon.

20. Female attendant to the Empress, carrying a banner similar to the latter.

This bearer of the second banner is robed like her companion, and carries a similar banner, but her robes are of different colours. She wears a white robe with a pink border, and her mantle is green. Under a yellow-plaqued belt a white kerchief is tucked in at the back, and from it hang down two red and one drab-coloured sash streamers, with bows in the centre. Her hair is arranged with parting in a double coil, and her two hair-pins have bright red jewels at the top, instead of the usual green jade tips.

C. *Right-Hand Group*

These ten figures represent the Ten Celestial Stems of the Chinese cycle. Five of them are in the character of the Five Planetary Deities (*cp. Figs. 25 and 26*), and the other five are their counterparts according to the Five Elements, and these wear the robes of civil officials. The five elements are wood, fire, earth, metal, water, and in the Cycle of the Stems there are two of each, so that each pair would include a planetary deity and a civil official. It is not entirely certain which official should be associated with what particular planet, but since the elements have their distinctive colours, the complexion of the officials may be somewhat of a guide to their associations (*Fig. 60*). All the ten have transparent haloes, but only the five officials carry tablets. These latter are dressed in a similar manner to the leading group of the Seven Stars, except that they have no ties to their caps, and do not carry thongs

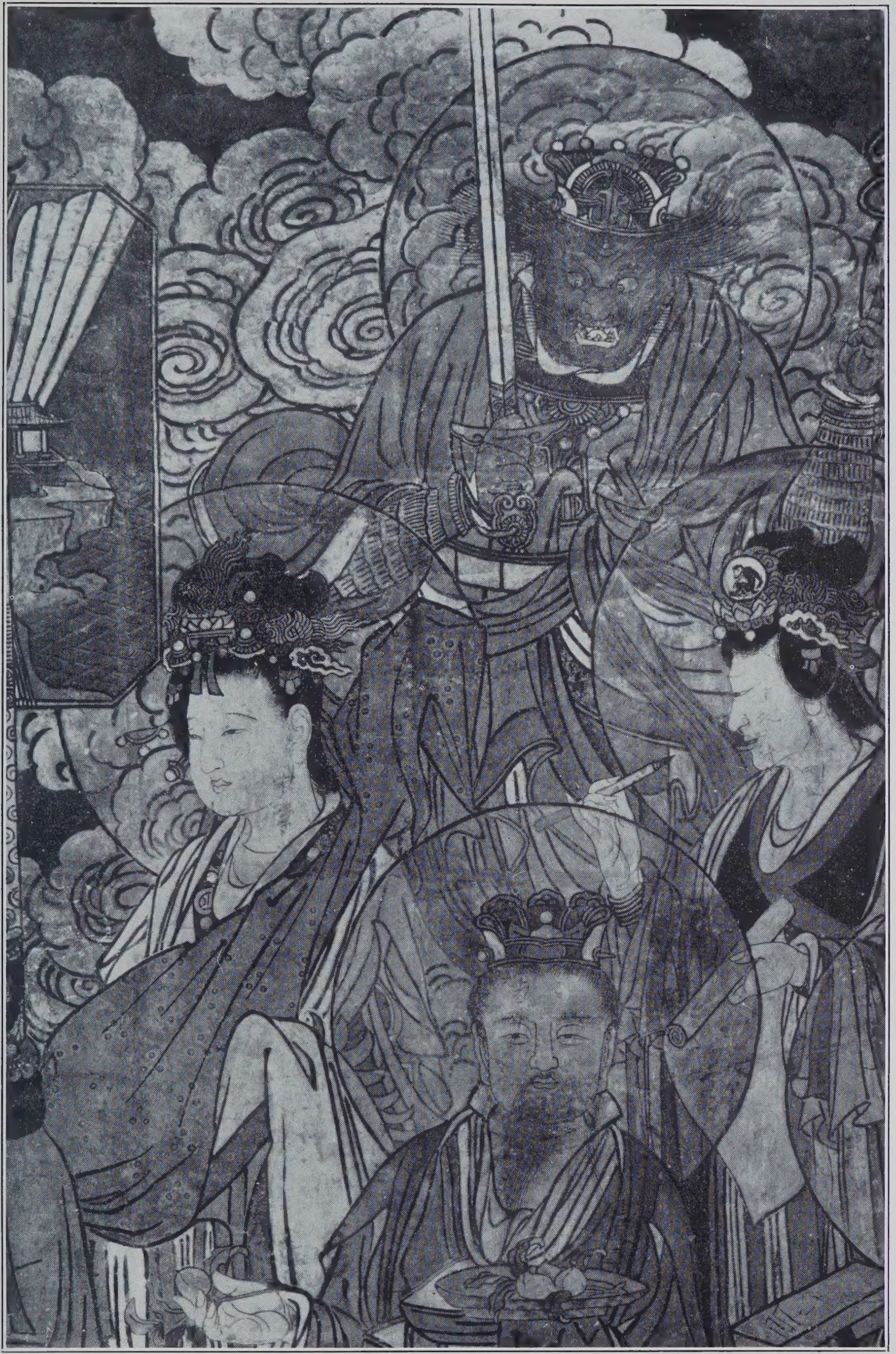


FIGURE 59

Detail of Five Planetary Deities.

with ear protectors, though they also wear "Lock" pectorals, and cuff-protectors.

In a banner now in the British Museum, which was obtained by Sir Aurel Stein from Tun-huang, and which is dated A.D. 897, a depiction of Buddha on a chariot is given, accompanied by the Five Planetary Deities. The cartouche in the upper left-hand corner gives the date and the subject of the painting. The figures there given are identical with the Five Planetary Deities of this fresco, and it is remarkable that there should be such close similarity of costumes, attributes, forms, and details, with a period of some 350 years intervening (*Figs. 25 and 26; cp. Figs. 58 and 59*).

21. The planetary deity Jupiter, who is the *chia* stem, the first of the ten, whose element is wood, and whose colour is green. He carries a platter of peaches, and holds a peach branch with one peach on it in his right hand. He ordinarily would have a boar's head in his head-dress, but this is missing (*cp. Figs. 26 and 58*).

He wears a white under-tunic, a bronze-coloured robe with plain yellow border, a green over-mantle, and a stole of green with dark centre and yellow lining. Over his robe in front is a red apron with white decorative band down the centre, and he has green cuff-protectors at the wrists. He wears a green belt, and also an upper breast belt of red. His shoe has a red up-turned point at the toe. His complexion is pink, and he has a long thin beard. His tiara-like cap is held on by a hat-pin, and there are no cap ties or thongs. He holds in his L. hand a plate of peaches, and in his R. hand one peach (*cp. Fig. 26: 2*).

22. The planetary deity Mars, who is the *ping* stem, the third of the ten, whose element is fire, and whose colour is red. He carries an uplifted sword, fire comes from his uplifted left index finger, and in his head-dress is a conventionalized horse-head.

In his R. hand he carries a straight-edged sword pointing upward, with index finger over the cross-bar of the guard. His L. hand is lifted up and from the pointed index finger flames of fire curl upwards. He wears a cap, with hat-pin, and a stylized horse-head is in its centre (*cp. Fig. 26: 3*). He wears a white under-tunic, a dark green robe, a red over-mantle lined with blue, a long red stole, and a green belt. His arm-guards have oblong plates overlapping upwards, and probably his leg-greaves would be similar, but they are not visible.

23. The planetary deity Saturn, who is the *wu* stem, the fifth of the

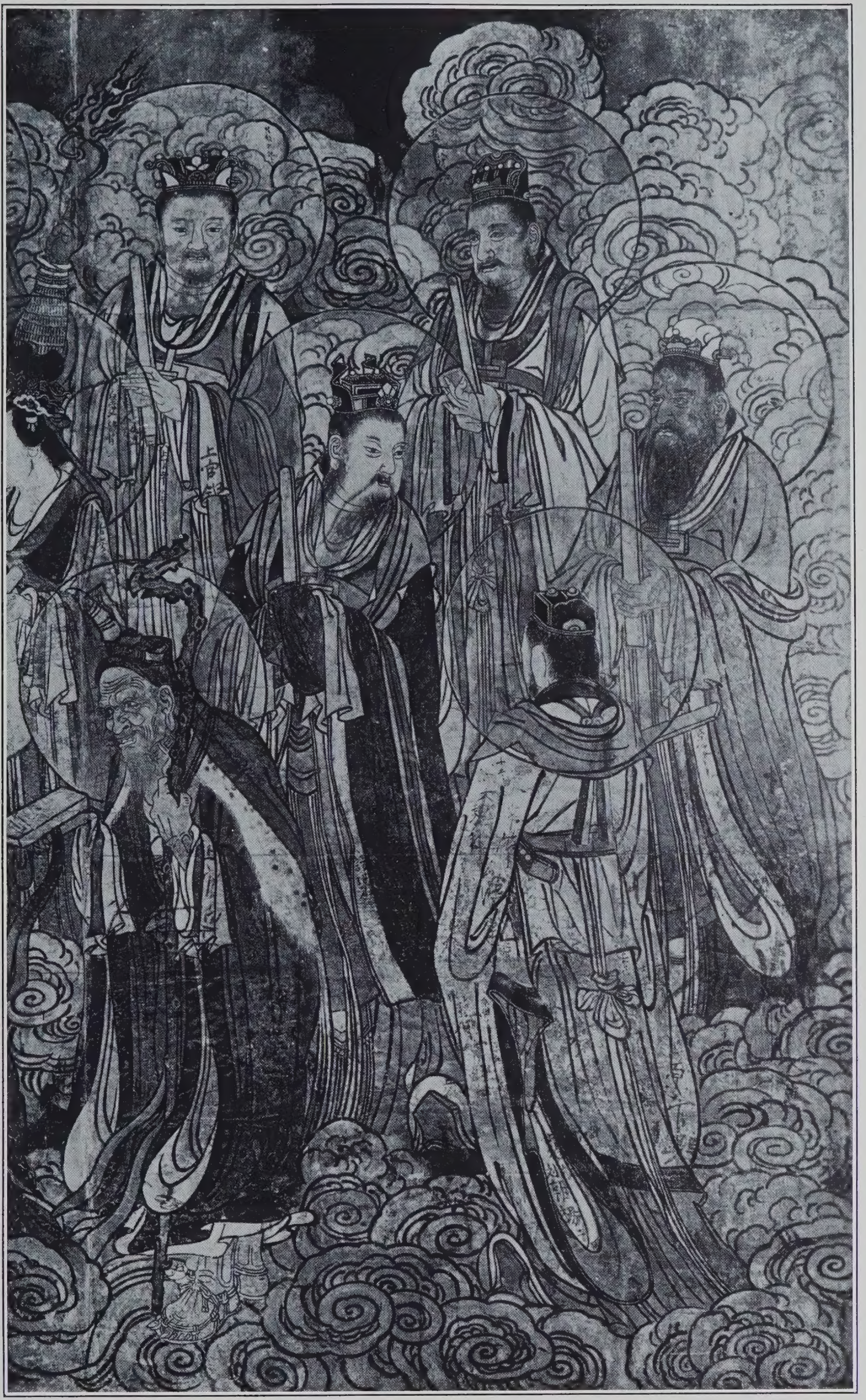


FIGURE 60

The Five Associates of the Celestial Stems.

ten, whose element is earth, and whose colour is yellow. He carries a pilgrim's staff, is shod with sandals, a small book-like object is in his right hand, and an ox-head is in the front of his head-dress. His mantle is lined with white fur having dark spots, suggestive of ermine.

He is depicted as an aged pilgrim (*cp. Fig. 26: 4*). In his L. hand he holds a gnarled staff. He wears sandals, which are probably made of straw. His under-tunic is white, his robe is brown with a blue border, and a cape of grey, lined with white fur and extending over the head like a "wind hood" (*fêng mao*), seems to take the place of a mantle. There are two green streamers down the front of his robe, and he wears green cuff-protectors. An ox-head design is in the centre of his head-dress.

24. The planetary deity Venus, who is the *kêng* stem, the seventh of the ten, whose element is metal, and whose colour is white. She is in female form and carries a lute, covered with a cloth which has a star-pattern design, while in her head-dress there is a bird or fowl. She is thus the Goddess of Music, as well as of Spring, which conception may be due to western influences.

She is dressed as a female, with an elaborate bird-design head ornament, and carries a lute, wrapped in a red cloth with stellar designs of "Three Star" groups (*Fig. 59; cp. Fig. 26: 5*). She wears a white under-tunic, a white robe with blue decorative border, a red apron in front, and a feathered fringe decorates the sleeves. Her hands are covered by drapery.

25. The planetary deity Mercury, who is the *jên* stem, the ninth of the ten, whose element is water, and whose colour is black. She is in female form, and carries a writing-brush in her right hand and a paper writing scroll in her left, while in her head-dress there is the figure of a monkey. In China, as in the West, Mercury is the messenger of the gods, and this might well be due to influence from the West.

She wears the customary white under-tunic, a black robe which is bordered with red, a white mantle with a ruff at the elbow, green cuff-protectors, and simple bracelets (*Fig. 59; cp. Fig. 26: 6*).

26. Civil official, probably representing the *yih* or second stem of the ten, whose element is wood, for he is the associate of Jupiter.

He wears a white tunic, a tan-coloured robe edged with blue, a red mantle, and a pea-green stole with dark-green centre. He carries a tablet, wears a "Long-life Lock" pectoral, green cuff-protectors, and a pink belt.

27. Civil official, probably representing the *ting* or fourth stem, whose element is fire, and who is associated with Mars, which is why his face is dark.

His mantle is blue, with yellow border lined with white, and his stole, green with a yellow lining, is draped round his waist. He wears a red apron, a red belt, his cap is mostly white, and his face is dark brown in colour.

28. Civil official, probably representing the *chi* stem, the sixth of the ten, whose element is earth, and who is associated with Saturn.

He wears a white mantle bordered with black, a red stole, and a red belt. His complexion is a dark tan colour.

29. Civil official, probably representing the *hsin* or eighth stem, whose element is metal, and whose associate is Venus.

His mantle is black bordered with pink; his stole is green with a dark centre, and he wears a red apron and a red belt. His shoes have a large red upturned point at the toe.

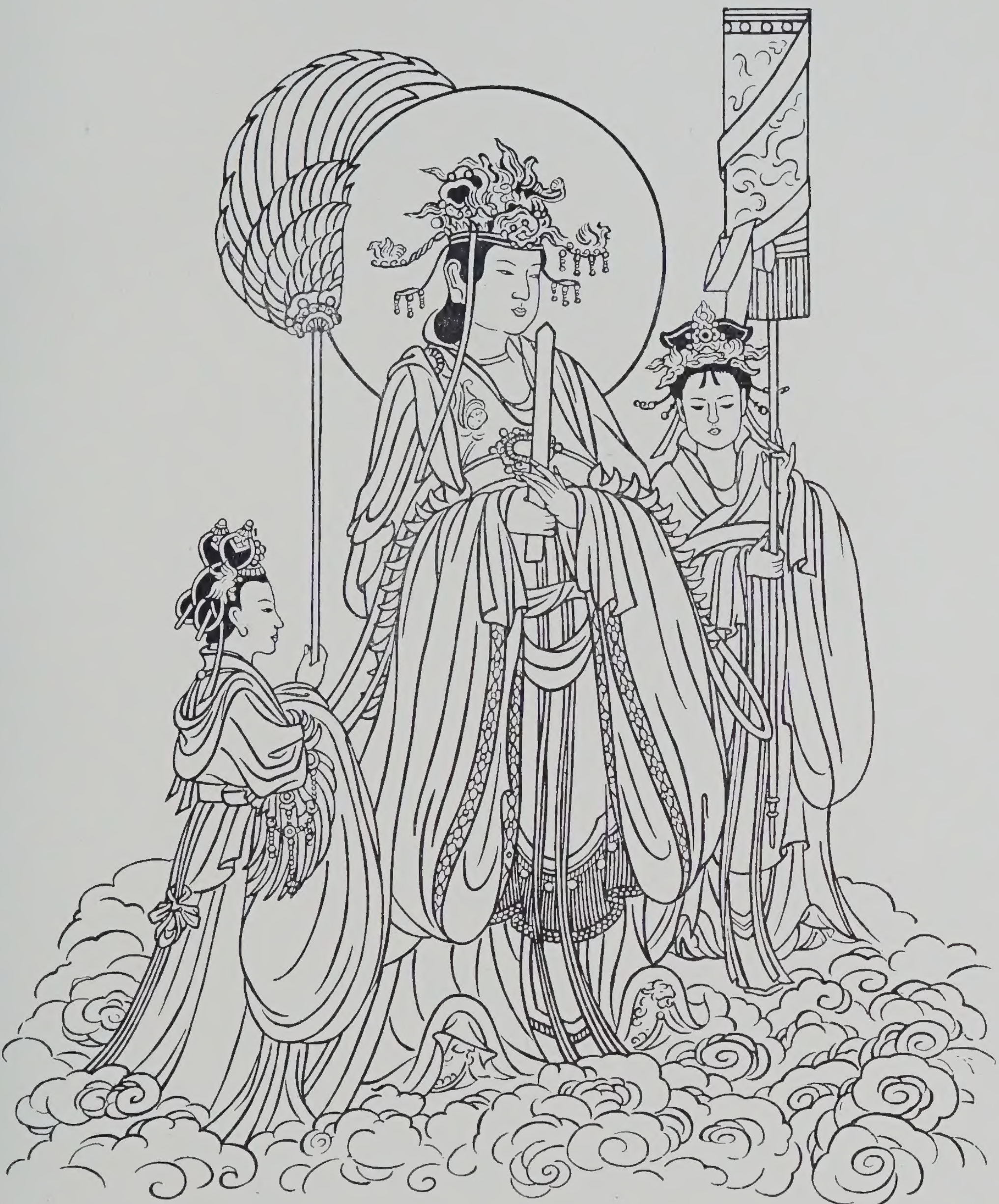
30. Civil official, probably representing the *kuei* or tenth stem of the cycle, whose element is water, and whose associate is Mercury.

He wears a green robe, and a yellow mantle with a dark floral border. His belt is green, and a white kerchief is tucked under it behind, over which a white sash, with bow in the centre, hangs down to the ground.

TAOIST

XIV

THE LORD OF THE SOUTHERN DIPPER



TABLEAU

THE LORD OF THE SOUTHERN DIPPER

A. RIGHT-HAND GROUP

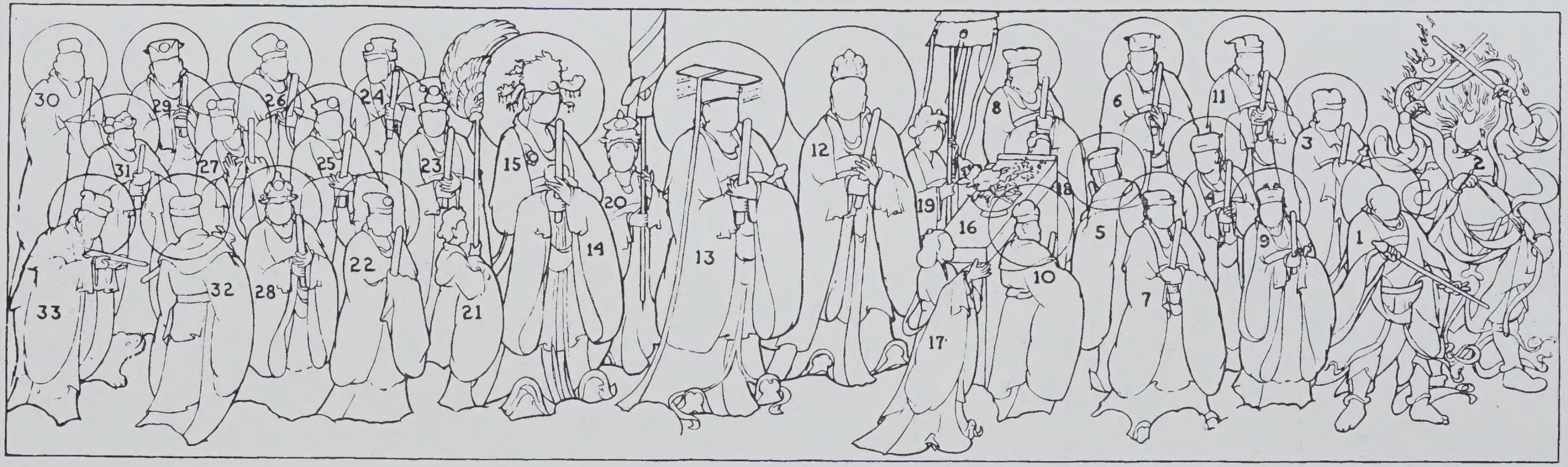
1. Lord of the Southern Dipper.
2. Attendant in Tantri form.
3. President of the Central Heaven,—Yellow.
4. President of the Eastern Heaven,—Green.
5. President of the Northeast Heaven,—White.
6. President of the Northern Heaven,—White.
7. President of the Northwest Heaven,—White.
8. President of the Western Heaven,—Red.
9. President of the Southwest Heaven,—Black.
10. President of the Southern Heaven,—Purple.
11. President of the Southeast Heaven,—Dark Green.

B. CENTRAL GROUP

12. Lao Tzu,—the Old Philosopher.
13. Yu Huang Shang Ti,—the Jade Emperor.
14. T'ien Hou—Empress of Heaven.
15. Celestial Cherub in Empress's Robe.
16. Movable Altar with offering of Flowers.
17. Attendant: Bearer of Altar.
18. Attendant: Bearer of Altar.
19. Attendant: Bearer of Banner.
20. Attendant: Bearer of Empress's Banner.
21. Attendant: Bearer of Empress's Fan.

C. LEFT-HAND GROUP

22. President of the Horse Year.
23. President of the Goat Year.
24. President of the Monkey Year.
25. President of the Cock Year.
26. President of the Pig Year.
27. President of the Snake Year.
28. President of the Tiger Year.
29. President of the Dragon Year.
30. President of the Rat Year.
31. President of the Ox Year.
32. President of the Hare Year.
33. President of the Dog Year.



LEFT HAND GROUP

22· President of the Horse Year
23· President of the Goat Year
24· President of the Monkey Year
25· President of the Cock Year
26· President of the Pig Year
27· President of the Snake Year
28· President of the Tiger Year
29· President of the Dragon Year
30· President of the Rat Year
31· President of the Ox Year
32· President of the Hare Year
33· President of the Dog Year

CENTRAL GROUP

12· Lao Tzu, – the Old Philosopher
13· Yụ Huang ShangTi, –the Jade Emperor
14· T'ien Hou – Empress of Heaven
15· Celestial Cherub in Empress' Robe
16· Movable Altar with offering of Flowers
17· Attendant: Bearer of Altar
18· Attendant: Bearer of Altar
19· Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20· Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Banner
21· Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Fan

RIGHT HAND GROUP

1· Lord of the Southern Dipper
2· Attendant in Tantri form
3· President of the Central Heaven, –Yellow
4· President of the Eastern Heaven, –Green
5· President of the Northeast Heaven, –White
6· President of the Northern Heaven, –White
7· President of the Northwest Heaven, –White
8· President of the Western Heaven, – Red
9· President of the Southwest Heaven, –Black
10· President of the Southern Heaven, –Purple
11· President of the Southeast Heaven, –Dark Green

FIGURE 62. *Key to the Taoist Fresco, Lord of the Southern Dipper.*

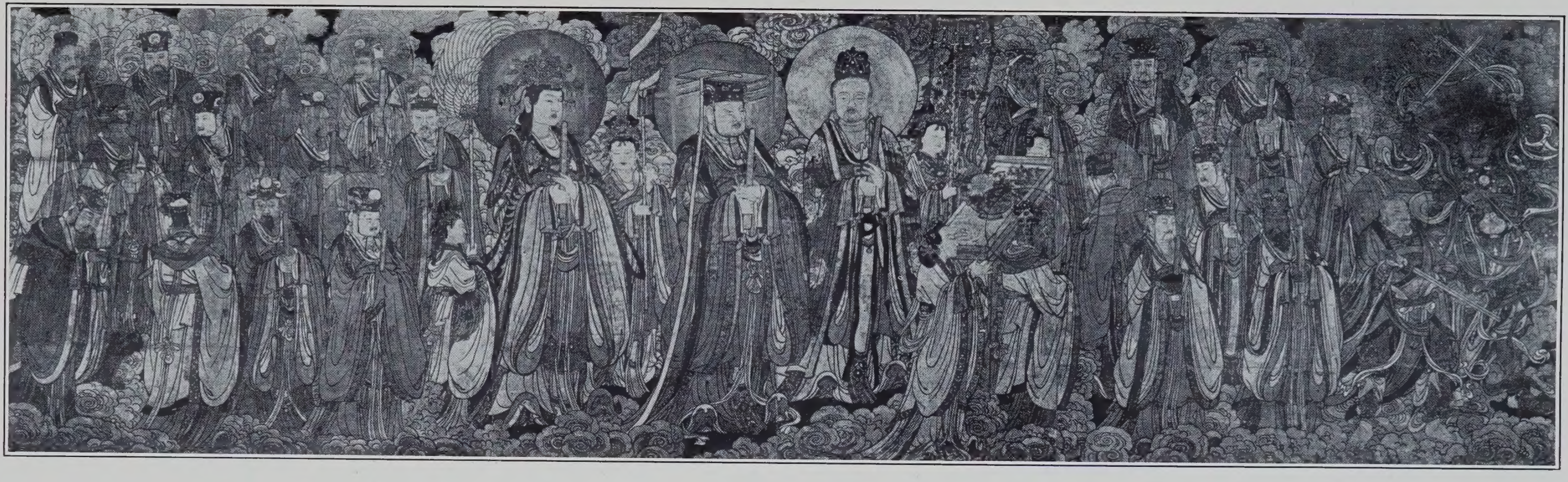


FIGURE 63. *The Lord of the Southern Dipper Fresco.*

XIV

THE LORD OF THE SOUTHERN DIPPER

THIS fresco is also processional, like that of the Lord of the Northern Dipper, with which it forms a pair. Both frescoes must have been on opposite walls of a temple hall, with the two processions leading up to an important central point of a third wall. There would probably be a fresco on this third wall, with a symmetrical composition, and doubtless an important Taoist trinity of figures would be standing before it. As the other fresco is led by the Lord of the Northern Dipper who controls death, so this fresco is led by a similar figure, the Lord of the Southern Dipper, who controls life. He also is a stout, energetic, and determined warrior, and he is robed and equipped in similar manner to the other, but he has no characteristic emblem associated with him.

This composition also divides itself readily into three parts. The first, or right-hand group, contains the leader of the procession, his four-handed attendant in Tantra form, and a group of nine persons who wear the garb of civil officials, and whom we assume to be the Presidents of the Nine Taoist Heavens. The second, or central group, is the most important, for in it are three great personages, Lao Tzu the founder of Taoism, Yü Huang the Jade Emperor, and the Empress of Heaven. These three are preceded by an altar carried by two young girls, on which is placed a glass bowl containing flowers. The third or left-hand group, is that of twelve persons in civilian official robes who represent the Twelve Animals of the years. They are the Twelve Terrestrial Branches of the cyclical system, which being co-ordinated with the Ten Heavenly Stems, form the Chinese cycle of time (*Fig. 23B*). The costumes of civil officials in general, such as are depicted in both these Taoist frescoes, are described above (*chap.* XIII).

As in the case of the companion fresco, this painting also is a vision of mythological worthies, intricately involved in the life issues which concern human beings, who move forward in stately procession on banks of white clouds which float in the deep-blue sky of night.

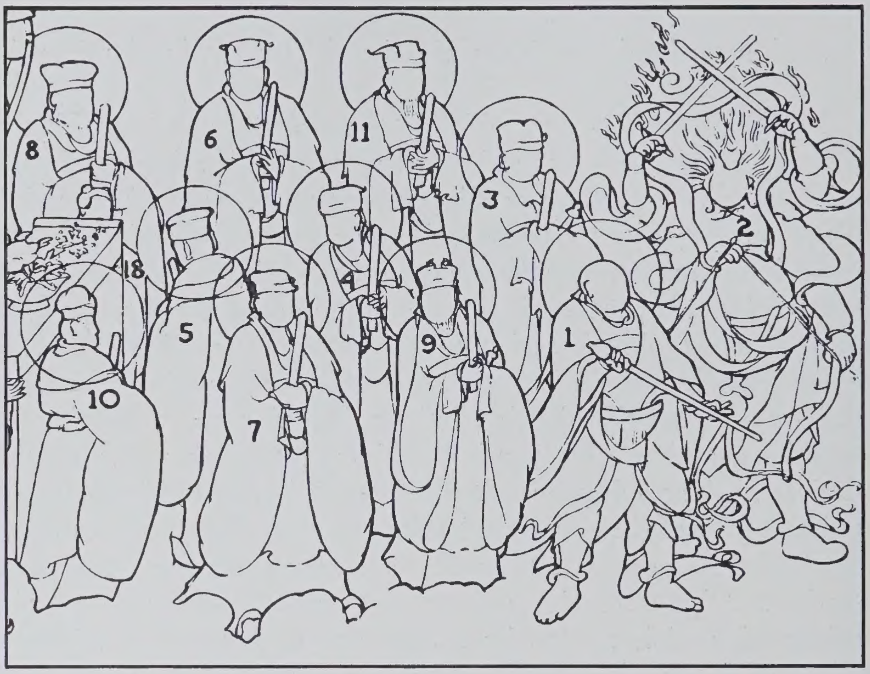
The Southern Dipper, which is the star group after which this fresco is named, is what is known as the Milk Dipper (*chap.* x), and by the Chinese as the Dipper Station (*Tou Hsü*), the eighth of the Twenty-eight Constellations or Stellar Mansions. These are divided into four quadrants of seven Stations each, whereof the first quadrant is that of the Azure Dragon on the East, the second that of the Sombre Warrior on the North, the third that of the White Tiger on the West, and the fourth that of the Vermilion Bird on the South. Each of these includes seven of the Constellations, and the Dipper is the first of the second or northern quadrant. The Dipper itself consists of six stars (*Fig. 27*), which are but a part of the constellation known to the West as Sagittarius, the Archer. The fact that the attendant of the Lord of the Southern Dipper carries a bow and arrows, must be taken as accidental, and is not to be thought of as purposely linking the Chinese Dipper with the Western conception of the constellation of the Archer. It is possible that the attendant of the Lord of the Southern Dipper may be the Guardian of the South, Tsêng Chang, whose symbol is sometimes a bow and two arrows (*cp. Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, Tokyo, vol.* XI, *Pl. 13*), though a bow and arrow is also associated with the Guardian of the East.

It is a fact worth noting that no ear-rings are worn by any individual in this picture, and that no ear-lobe has been pierced for ear-rings. All the figures except the Tantra attendant and the female attendants have head haloes, those of Lao Tzu, Yü Huang, and T'ien Hou being opaque, the others transparent.

This fresco is in good condition; it has apparently been retouched only at the joins of the sections, and the colours have well retained their freshness. It measures 34 feet 1 inch in length, and 10 feet 5 inches high.

A. The Right-Hand Group

1. The Lord of the Southern Dipper. The Southern Dipper, as pointed out above (*chap.* x), is mentioned in the Book of Odes nearly three thousand years ago, and down through the centuries



RIGHT HAND GROUP

1· Lord of the Southern Dipper
2· Attendant in Tantri form
3· President of the Central Heaven, -Yellow
4· President of the Eastern Heaven, -Green
5· President of the Northeast Heaven, -White
6· President of the Northern Heaven, -White
7· President of the Northwest Heaven, -White
8· President of the Western Heaven, - Red
9· President of the Southwest Heaven, -Black
10· President of the Southern Heaven, -Purple
11· President of the Southeast Heaven, -Dark Green

FIGURE 64

Key to the Right-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

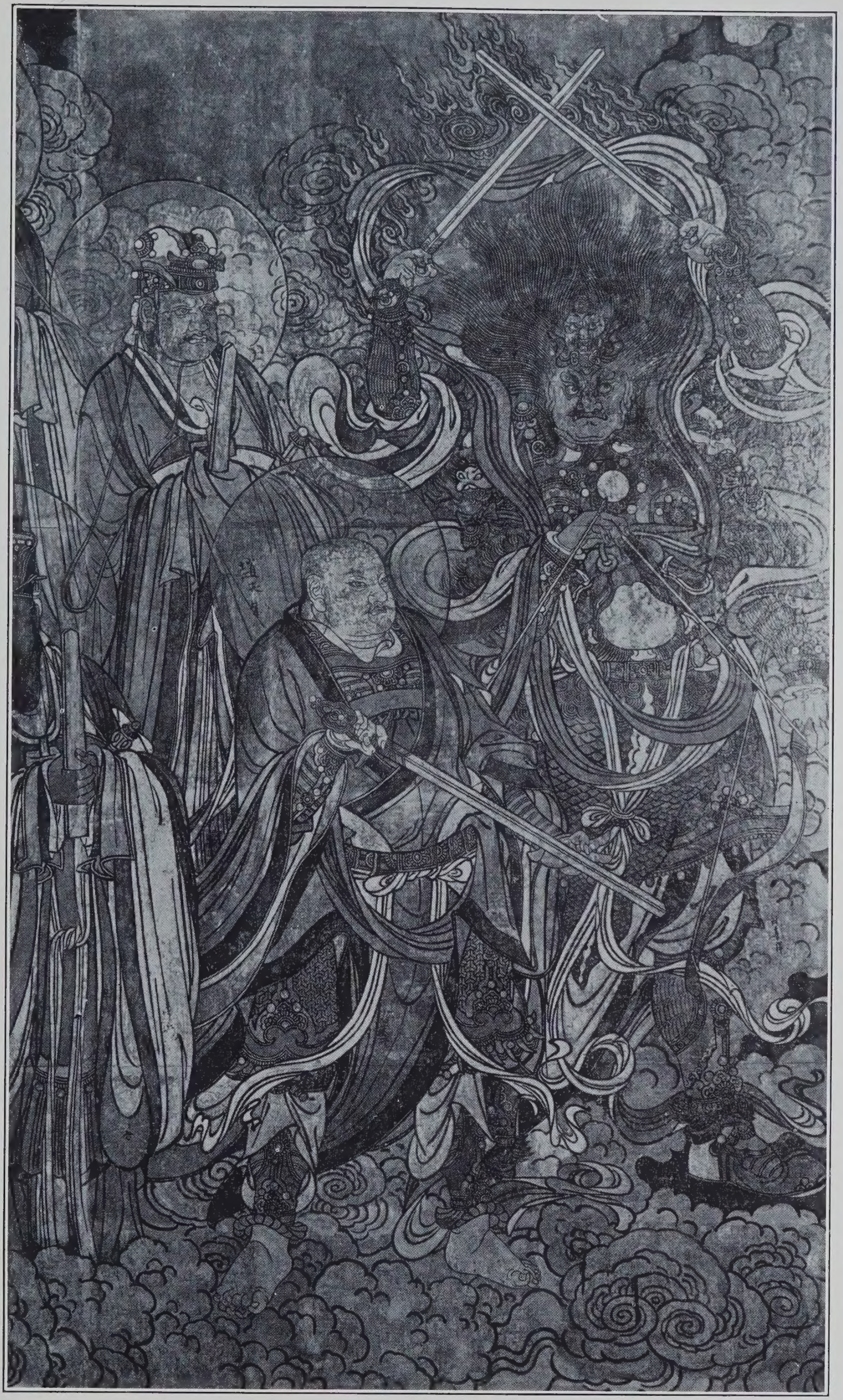


FIGURE 65

The Right-hand Group (1) of the Southern Dipper.

it has occupied an important place in Chinese mythology and astrology. As usual in China, the natural phenomenon was personified, so that the idea of a Spirit or Lord of the Dipper was popularly accepted and acted upon. In the Northern Dipper a great hero like Wu Chên was found to personify it, but in regard to the Southern Dipper, although the idea and the name of the Spirit that controls the star group were generally accepted, there seems to be nothing that associates the leader with actions of an important historical nature. One myth that concerns him is that his mother was the Dipper Mother (*Tou Mu*), and that there were nine sons who were known as the nine Human Emperors (*Jên Huang*), and among these were the Lords of the Northern and Southern Dippers (*Chinese Superstitions; Doré, Shanghai, 1931, vol.* IX, *p. 107*). In form he is depicted very like Chên Wu of the Northern Dipper, with the same kind of robes, and likewise holding a drawn sword, but there is no characteristic emblem associated with him.

The upper part of his corslet seems to be of tan-coloured leather with a triple-line design, and with green applique decoration. The lower part of the garment reaches almost to the knee, and is of the diaper-design type of three-armed stars, decorated with red and green at the bottom, and fringed with a pointed feather edging. His arm-guards and leg-greaves are of the same material as the corslet. He is barefooted, and at the ankles there are blue ruffs which are attached to the bottom of the greaves. He wears a white under-tunic, and a green mantle with plain black border, fastened under the right arm, with a flap-like extension of the mantle falling in front. His belt is decorated with golden ornaments, and from it there hangs a white sash, knotted in the centre, and opening out as it falls to the ground. His stole is pea-green in colour with a bronze-green centre and a white lining. It is draped over his left shoulder and about his body, but it has slipped down from his right or sword-arm. There is white drapery swathed over his legs and fastened at the knee with jewelled clasps. Behind his head is a transparent halo, he is bareheaded and his hair is dishevelled, and he holds in his right hand a drawn straight-edged sword (*Fig. 65*).

2. Attendant in Tantra form. As pointed out above, this may be the Guardian of the South. In the Shosoin, among the objects of the eighth century A.D., there are lacquered cabinet panels on which are paintings of religious subjects, among which there is one of a Guardian of the South in Tantra form, who carries a bow and

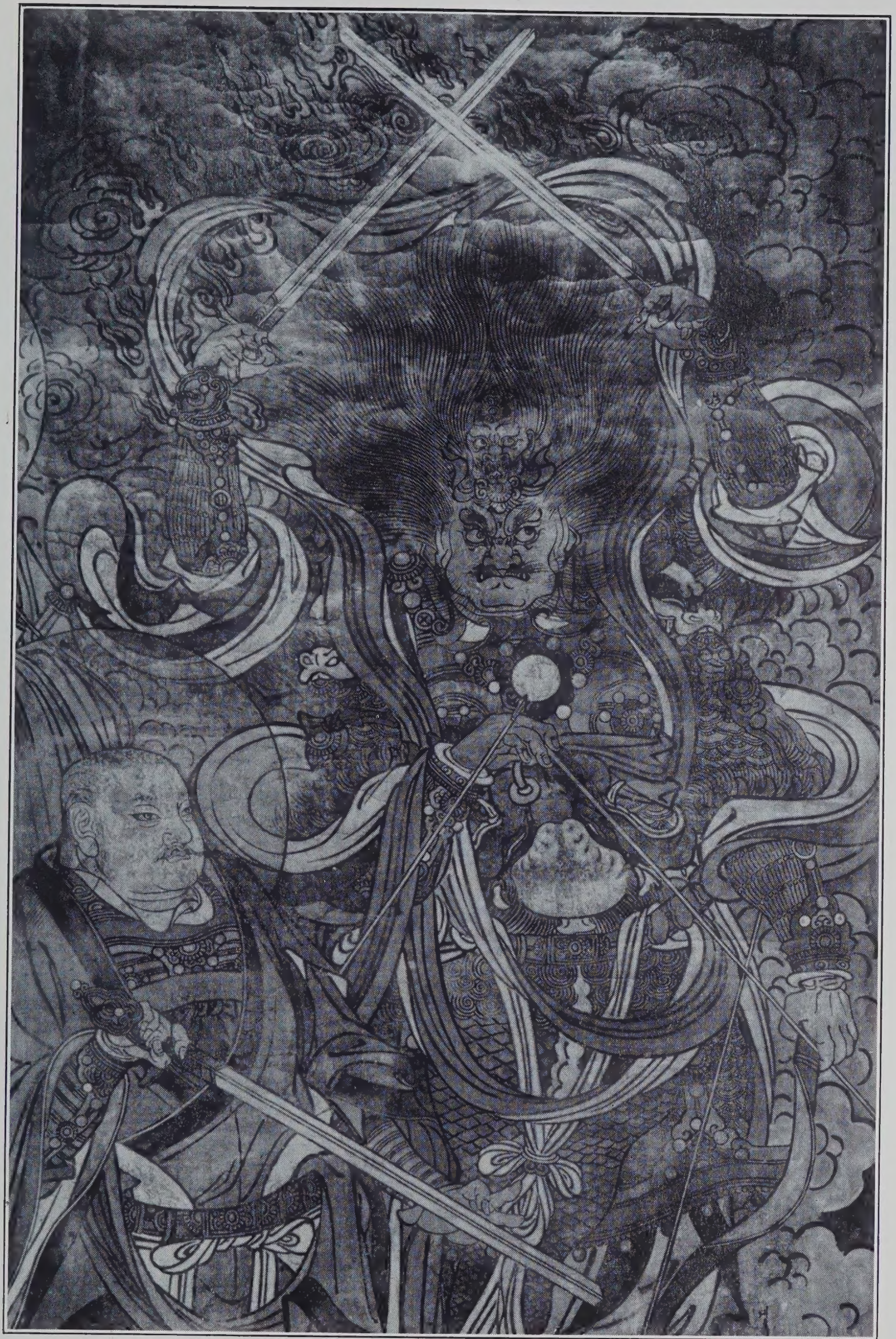


FIGURE 66

Detail from Right-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

two arrows, and is in mail-armour similar to this Tantra attendant of the fresco (*Shosoin Gomotsu Zuroku, Tokyo, vol.* XI, *Pl. 13*). The attendant is four-armed, and has two faces. He carries a pair of swords, crossed above his head, in his upper hands, and a bow and two arrows in the lower hands. His armour is according to the general description given above (*chap.* XI).

This figure has four arms, and is double-headed. His larger head has a dark face, and closed mouth with two fangs showing. The smaller head, also dark in face but with open mouth, is immediately above the larger. From these two heads the hair flares out like a bushy mop, and from it flames of fire curl upwards. His corslet is complicated with gem-studded plaques, but on the shoulders are decorated plates of scale armour. The skirt of the garment shows the same kind of plates, as well as a simpler scale on a flap in front, which falls from a red and gold hip-belt. At the breast there appears to be another belt, from which a light-coloured sporran-like object is suspended just above the hip-belt. From the latter there hang white sash streamer-ends, which are tied with a bow in the centre. The four arm-guards and the two leg-greaves show armour of oblong plates, with a blue and gold applique decoration. He wears a white under-tunic, and a blue mantle or robe lined with bronze-green. His stole, which is long and slender, is red with white lining. At the four elbows there are ruffs of a blue colour, and at the ankles are blue ruffs which may be of feathers. The knees are draped in white, and the shoes have a white heel-cap, red toe-cap, yellow socks, and a protective shield over the instep. In his two upper hands he wields two straight-edged swords which are crossed; and his two lower hands hold a composite bow with an arrow laid across it, while another arrow by his right hand is probably sticking out of an unseen arrow case (*Figs. 65 and 66*).

3 to 11. The Presidents of the Nine Heavens or Mansions. These nine figures in official robes are probably the Presidents of the Nine Heavens. They are also known as the Nine Fields of Heaven, and are considered to be the Nine Divisions of the Celestial Sphere. They are recognized by both Buddhists and Taoists, and are conceived of as successive gradations of heavenly spheres from lower to higher. They have also to do with the eight points of the compass, with the addition of a ninth for the centre, and each has a colour designation.

3. The President of the Central Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Yellow.

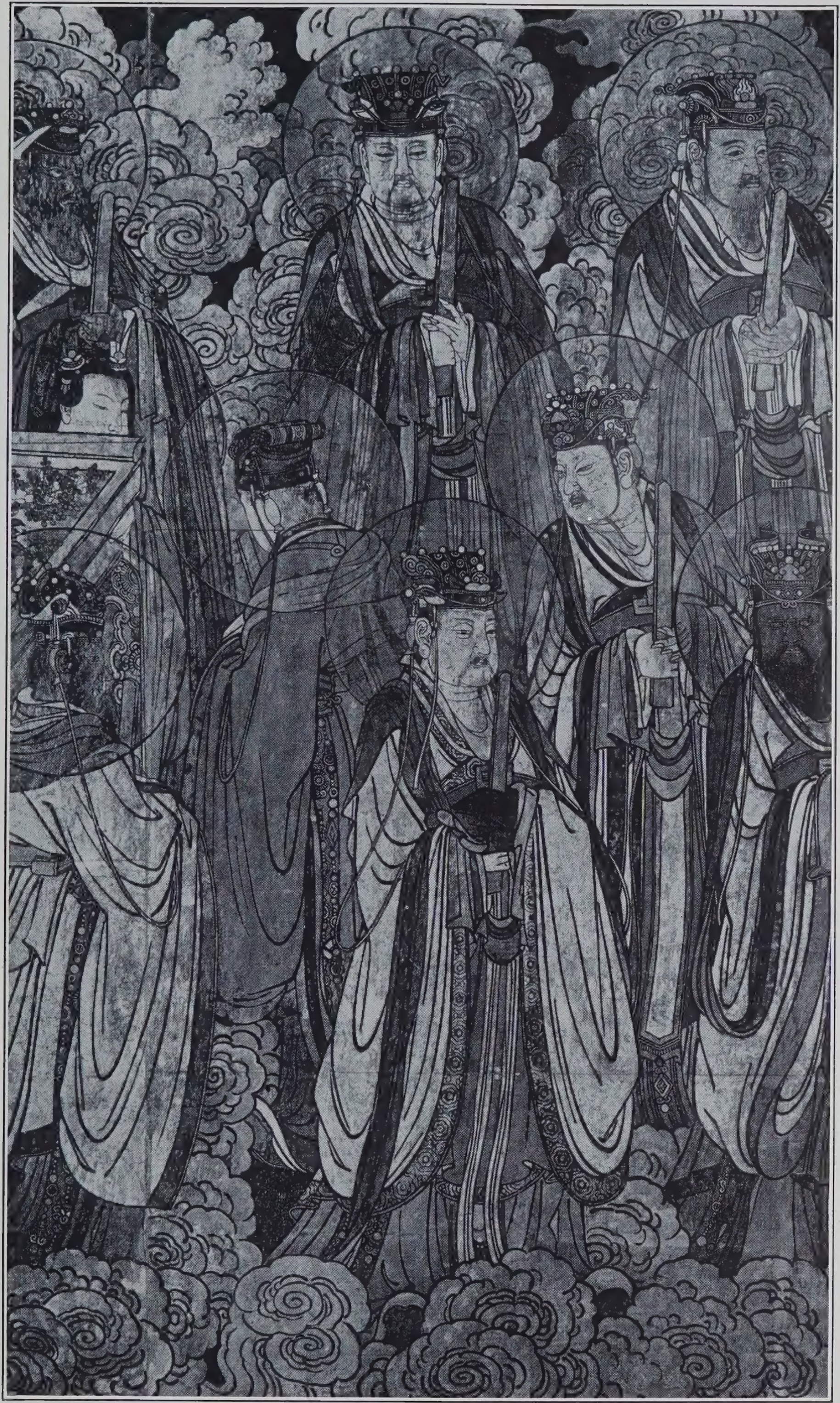


FIGURE 67

The Right-hand Group (2) of the Southern Dipper.

He wears a white tunic, a red robe with a plain blue border lined green, and a green stole with a blue centre. His cap is mainly of white, red, black, and gold colours, held on by a hat-pin, and by thongs tied under the chin, and a long cord with ear-protectors behind the ears. He carries a sceptre under his left arm, and holds a tablet in both hands which are covered by a red cloth, which may be part of the sleeve of his red robe. He wears the usual green cuff-protectors, and the "Lock" pectoral suspended on his breast.

4. The President of the Eastern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Green.

He is robed similarly to the previous figure, except that his robe is green, and his mantle is white with green border. His stole is green with a bronze centre, and he wears a red belt. He does not appear to have a sceptre.

5. The President of the North-east Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

This figure is bowing towards the altar, so his back only is seen. He wears a green robe, a red mantle with decorative panels hanging from a red belt, and his stole is light green.

6. The President of the Northern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

He wears a blue mantle, and a green stole with bronze centre. From a red belt hangs a decorative red panel. He does not have chin ties to his cap, which all the others have.

7. The President of the North-west Heaven, whose distinctive colour is White.

He wears a green robe, a white mantle with decorative green border, and a blue stole with grey centre. He wears a red belt, and a red apron frontal.

8. The President of the Western Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Red.

His robe is black with a yellow border. His stole is red with a green lining. He wears a red belt, and carries a sceptre under his left arm.

9. The President of the South-west Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Black.

He wears a blue robe with red apron, and a white mantle with green border. His stole is of bronze colour, with a blue border lined yellow. He also carries a sceptre under his left arm.

Only three of these officials carry sceptres, though all have the tablets and pectorals.

10. The President of the Southern Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Purple.

This figure is standing sideways by the altar. He wears a green robe with red side-panels, and his white mantle is edged with a decorative border. His stole is green with light-green lining.

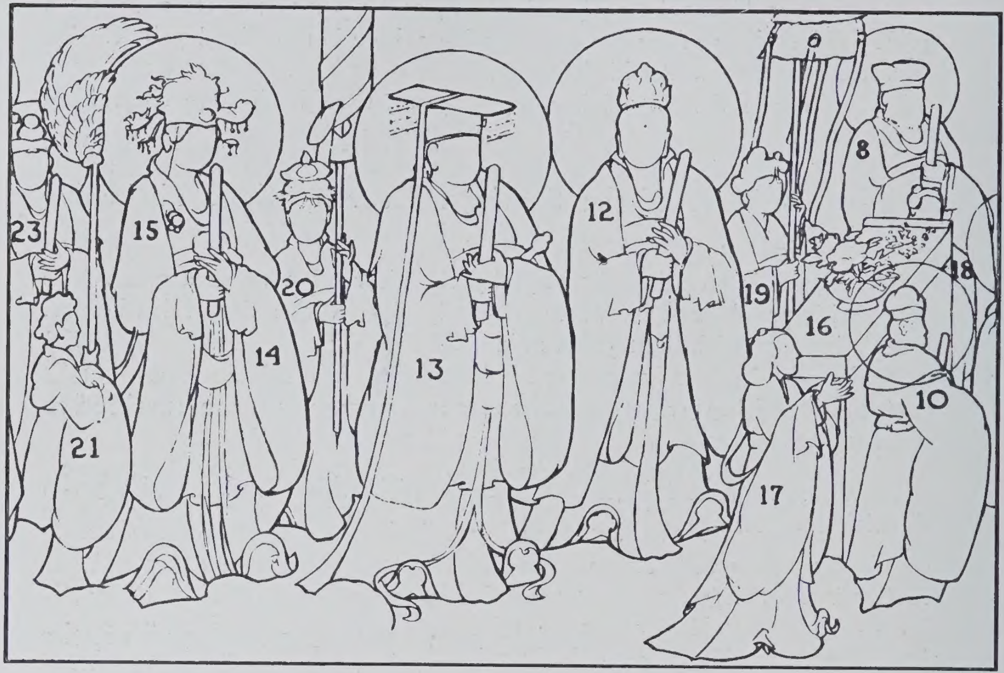
11. The President of the South-east Heaven, whose distinctive colour is Dark Green.

He wears a green robe, a blue mantle with white border, and a green stole with dark centre.

B. *Central Group*

This group contains three important personages—Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, the Jade Emperor, and the Empress of Heaven. They are preceded by two girls carrying a movable altar on which is an offering of flowers in a glass bowl. There is also a young woman attendant who carries a ceremonial banner, and two young girl attendants to the Empress, who carry a banner and a feathered fan respectively.

12. Lao Tzu—the Old Philosopher—was born in 604 B.C., and was senior contemporary of Confucius, but the date and place of his death are unknown. His native place was in the modern Honan, and he was keeper of the archives at Lo-yang, the capital of the Chou Dynasty, where he is said to have been visited by Confucius. He is generally considered to have been the founder of the Taoist religion, but that system actually was in existence before his time. He is said also to have been the author of the Tao-Tê-Ching, one of the early works dealing with Taoist philosophy, but this is not now attributed to him. Legends of many kinds have been woven about his name, and by Taoists he is worshipped as the first of their Trinity. P'an Ku, the Taoist creator of the universe, and



CENTRAL GROUP

12 · Lao Tzu, – the Old Philosopher
13 · Yụ Huang ShangTi, – the Jade Emperor
14 · T'ien Hou – Empress of Heaven
15 · Celestial Cherub in Empress' Robe
16 · Movable Altar with offering of Flowers
17 · Attendant: Bearer of Altar
18 · Attendant: Bearer of Altar
19 · Attendant: Bearer of Banner
20 · Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Banner
21 · Attendant: Bearer of Empress' Fan

FIGURE 68

Key to the Central Group of the Southern Dipper.

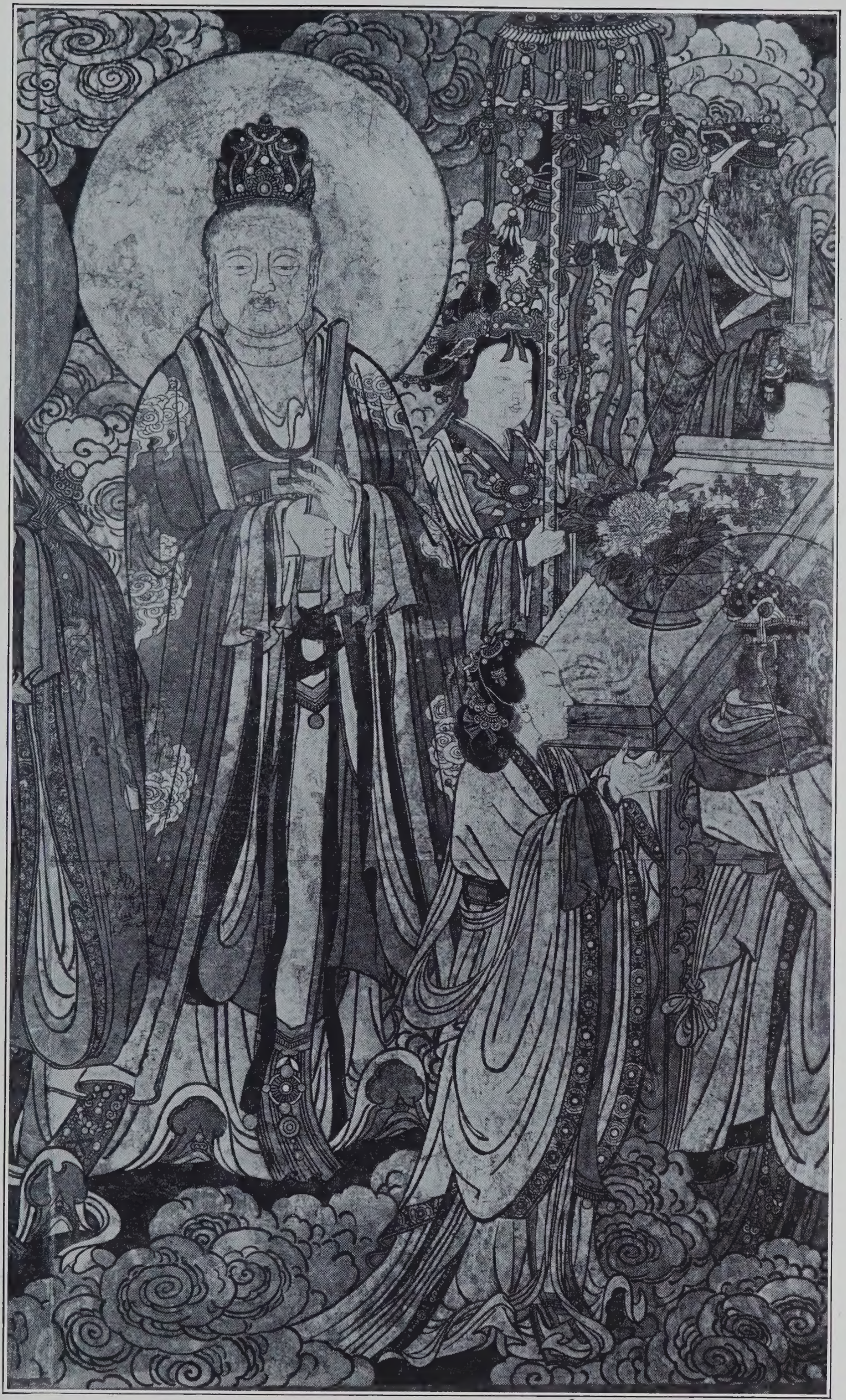


FIGURE 69

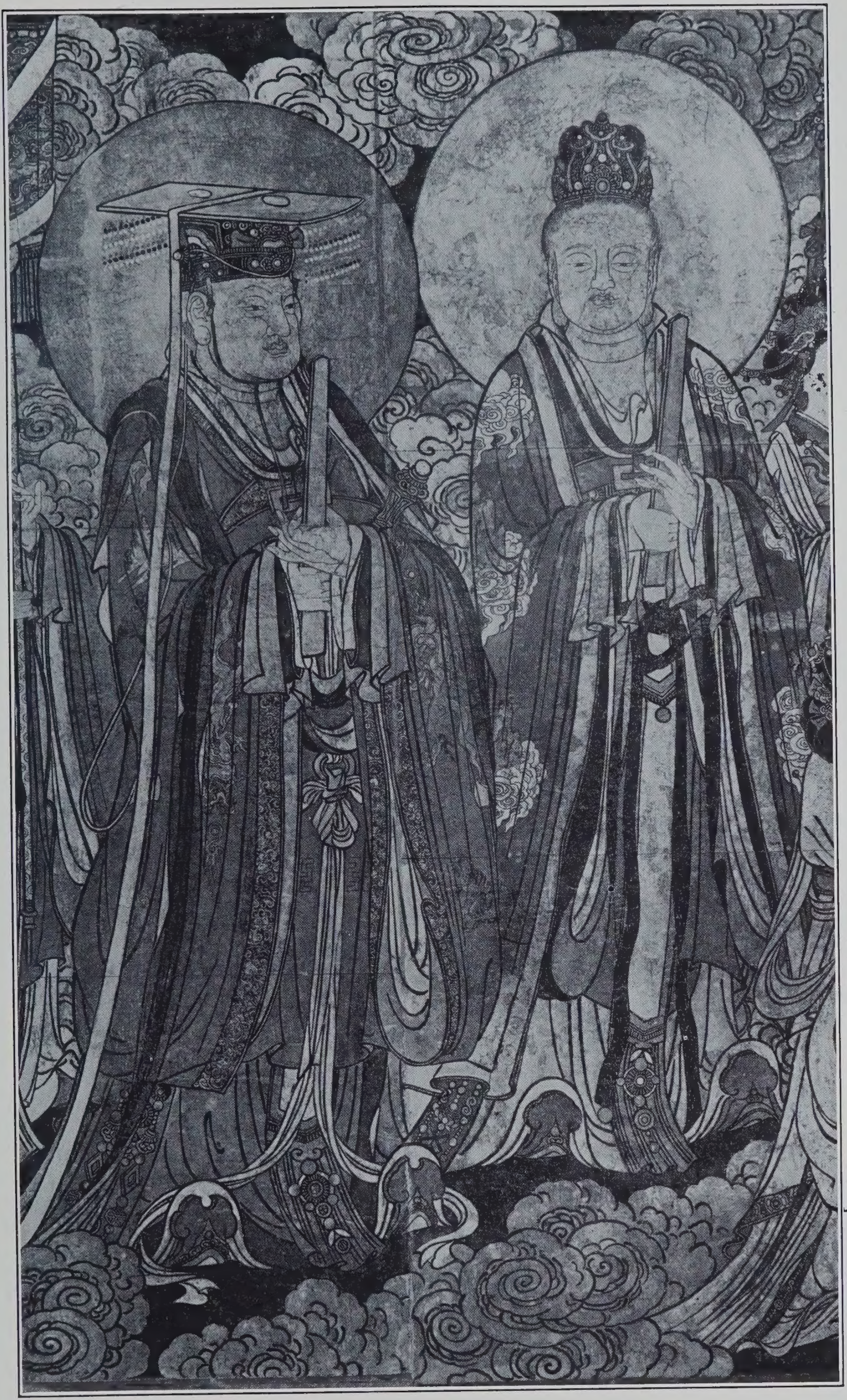
Altar of the Floral Offering of the Southern Dipper.

the Jade Emperor (*Yü Huang Shang Ti*) being the other members usually associated with Lao Tzu in this Trinity. Lao Tzu professed to have found the solution of all things human and divine in his interpretation of *Tao*, the WAY; but his chief claim to immortality is based on his doctrine of Inaction: "Do nothing, and all things will be done!"

As a sect Taoism has been a strong rival of Buddhism, though for that matter Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, the so-called Three Religions of China, have all at times been rivals and have had their common experiences of popularity and eclipse.

He wears a white under-tunic, a light-yellow robe edged with blue and lined with green, a red apron frontal over which hangs a cream panel decorated with green and red, and narrow blue streamers flow from the belt at front. His mantle is green with a decorative border, and on each shoulder is a sun and moon respectively, floating in clouds, while on the sides of the mantle are mountains also set in clouds, which may be symbolic of the Taoist "Isles of the Blest," whence Lao Tzu is supposed to have come. He wears a plain red belt, under which appears a second belt decorated with yellow plaques. He wears a pectoral of "Lock" design, carries the tablet in his two hands, which are uncovered, and his sleeves are equipped with green cuff-protectors. It is customary for Taoist teachers to wear their hair done up in a knob at the top of the head, which apparently is the case in this figure, but the knob here is covered with an ornamented and jade-studded knob-cap, which has a single cap-pin at the top, but has no retaining thongs or ties. The shoes he wears have large red up-turned points, and the body of the shoe would appear to be decorated.

13. The Jade Emperor (*Yü Huang Shang Ti*) is reckoned by Taoists to be the Supreme Lord of the physical world, and the saviour of mankind. Actually he does not go back very early in Chinese history, but was brought into being by the Sung Emperor Chên Tsung (A.D. 998-1023), who to pacify the people, announced with great pomp that he was in direct communication with the gods of heaven. In the autumn of 1012 he called his ministers together and told of a visit from an immortal who had brought a letter from Yü Huang. In 1013 the Emperor had a statue made of Yü Huang and placed in the Palace of Pure Jade (*Yü Ch'ing Kung*), and worshipped it with all his court. Two years later the Emperor conferred on him high-sounding titles, such as the "Grand



大宋治平二年重修特此達知即請

FIGURE 70

Lao Tzu and the Jade Emperor of the Southern Dipper.
Graffito from Right Sleeve of Jade Emperor, giving date A.D. 1065.

Sovereign of Heaven." In A.D. 1115 another Emperor, Hui Tsung, had a magnificent temple constructed in his honour, and he was granted the right to wear the robe of an Emperor—which is as he is depicted in this fresco. Orders were also issued for temples to be built to him all over the empire and statues of him cast. The highest title, Shang Ti, was conferred on him by this Emperor, thus putting him on the level with Shang Ti, the Supreme Sovereign of the Confucian scholars. From that time Yü Huang became the most popular god of the people, and for them generally he was God. He was thought of as a personal ruler, who had his court, palace, and ministers, and received delegations from other gods as his subordinates (*see Chinese Superstitions*, *Doré*, *vol.* IX, *pp. 9-16*).

The Jade Emperor, who was only given imperial rank in A.D. 1115, wears the full imperial robes similar to those of the Heavenly Emperor and the Yellow Emperor of the other fresco. The emblems of the Twelve Ornaments (*Fig. 24*) are depicted, and at least six different ones may be distinguished. They differ in form and position from the emblems on the robes of the other two Emperors,—the libation cups themselves are omitted, but in their place are pictures of the monkey and the tiger which are usually drawn *on*, or depicted as if they were *inside*, the respective cup. The talisman emblem in this case is on the red frontal of the mantle, and not on the robe. He wears a white tunic, a green robe, and a red mantle with decorative blue border, lined with green. His stole is blue, lined with white. He carries a tablet in his hands, a jewelled sceptre on his left side, has a pectoral, and cuff-protectors, and wears a red belt. His head-dress has a mortar-board top with bead fringes front and back, and ties and thongs and ear-protectors such as those of the other two Emperors. His shoes also have the large red up-turned points.

14. T'ien Hou, the Empress of Heaven. There is an Empress of Heaven who is known as the Heavenly Mother (*T'ien Mu*), the Heavenly Concubine (*T'ien Fei*), and also as the Dipper Mother (*Tou Mu*). The worship of this Empress of Heaven sprang up suddenly at the end of the eleventh century, and developed with great rapidity in the twelfth century. She is the goddess of sailors under the name Holy Mother of the Heavens (*T'ien Shang Shêng Mu*), and is very popular along the coast from Hangchow southward to Canton (*Asiatic Mythology; Maspero, London, 1932, pp. 329-331*). The Empress of Heaven of the fresco is another mythological person of a much earlier period. The historian Ssu-ma

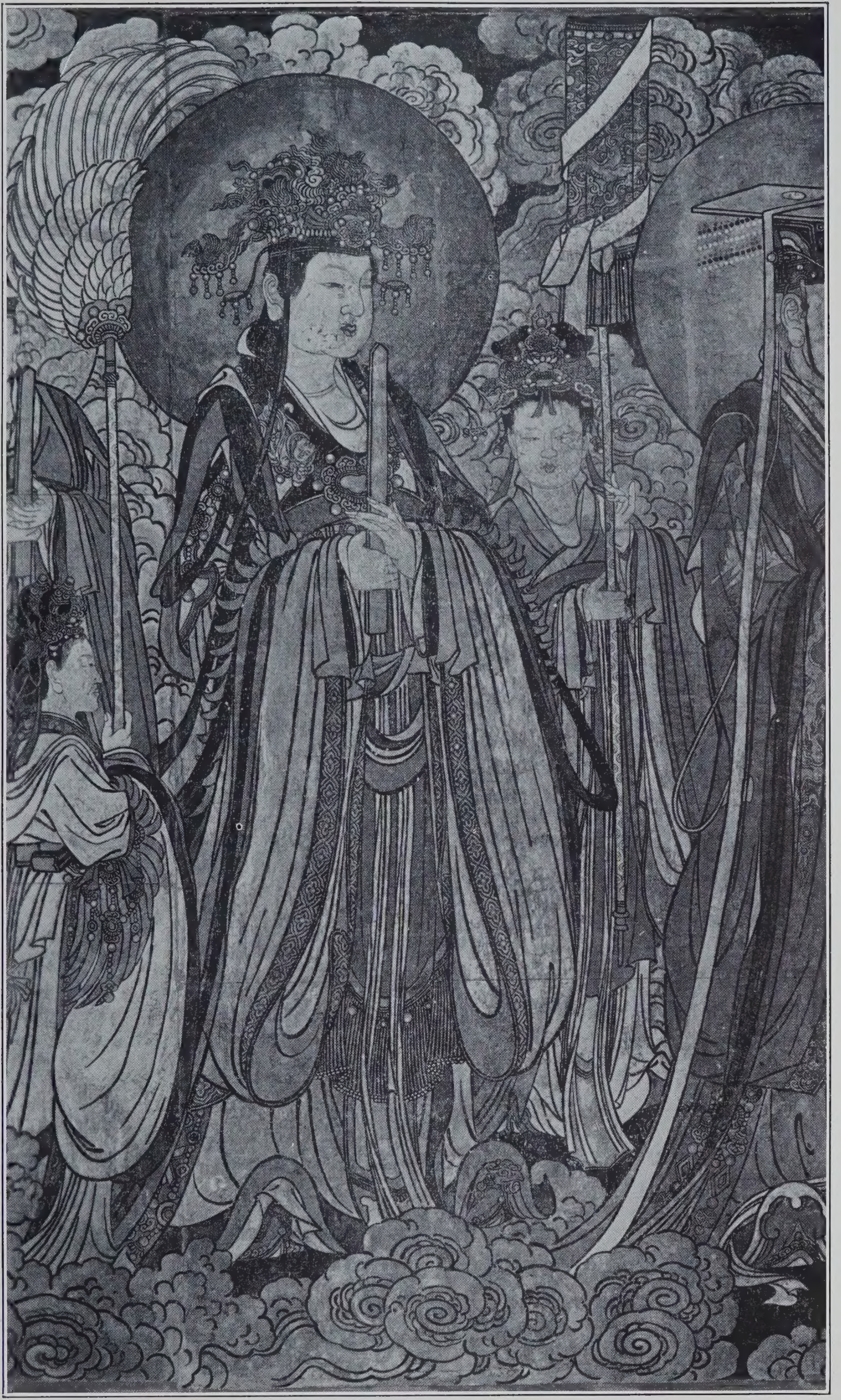


FIGURE 71

The Empress of Heaven of the Southern Dipper.

Ch'ien relates that the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti, "established his power by causing the descent from heaven of the Drought, who was his own daughter, and who remained a goddess" (*Chinese Civilization; Granet, London, 1930, p. 10*). So she is the daughter of the Yellow Emperor and is worshipped as the Goddess of Drought. This has to do with the harvests, so that her function in the processes of human life is similar to that of the Empress of Earth, the corresponding figure on the other fresco, who is the Goddess of the Soil.

She wears a white tunic, a white robe with blue edging, a white mantle with blue decorative border lined with green, and a blue and green stole, lined with white. She seems also to wear an elaborate cape of white, blue, and gold with applique of ornaments and gems, though this may be a part of the mantle. At her elbows there is an edging of feathered fringe (*Figs. 71 and 72*), which may be a feathered decoration similar to that of the attendant on her right. From a red belt hangs a red apron-like frontal with green fringe, over which hang streamers of white. She wears an elaborate head-dress with bird-like ornaments, but there is no disc with the "heaven" symbol. Its thongs for tying are hanging loose, and there is no long cord with ear-protectors. Her hands, which are uncovered, hold the tablet, and green cuff-protectors hang over the wrists. Her shoes have red phoenix-heads on the up-turned points.

15. The celestial cherub in the Empress of Heaven's right bosom is probably a decorative emblem on the garment. The upper half of the body is that of a little child, the lower half being that of a bird, similar to the celestial cherubs on the Maitreya fresco (*chap.* XII*: 26*). The cherub holds in its hand a lotus flower—which probably brings it into the group of Apsaras, one of whose functions is to drop flowers as blessings on deities, or those favoured by the gods. There is a similar cherub in the bosom drapery of Empress Hu of the Buddhist fresco (*Fig. 43*).

16. The movable altar is similar to that of the Lord of the Northern Dipper, but there is no frontal laid upon it, and the sacred offering is seen to be a glass bowl with two kinds of flowers in it. One of the flowers is the small paeony which flowers in the spring, and the other is probably a camellia sprig, or a flowering branch of the tea plant, which belongs to the Camellia family and also flowers in the spring.

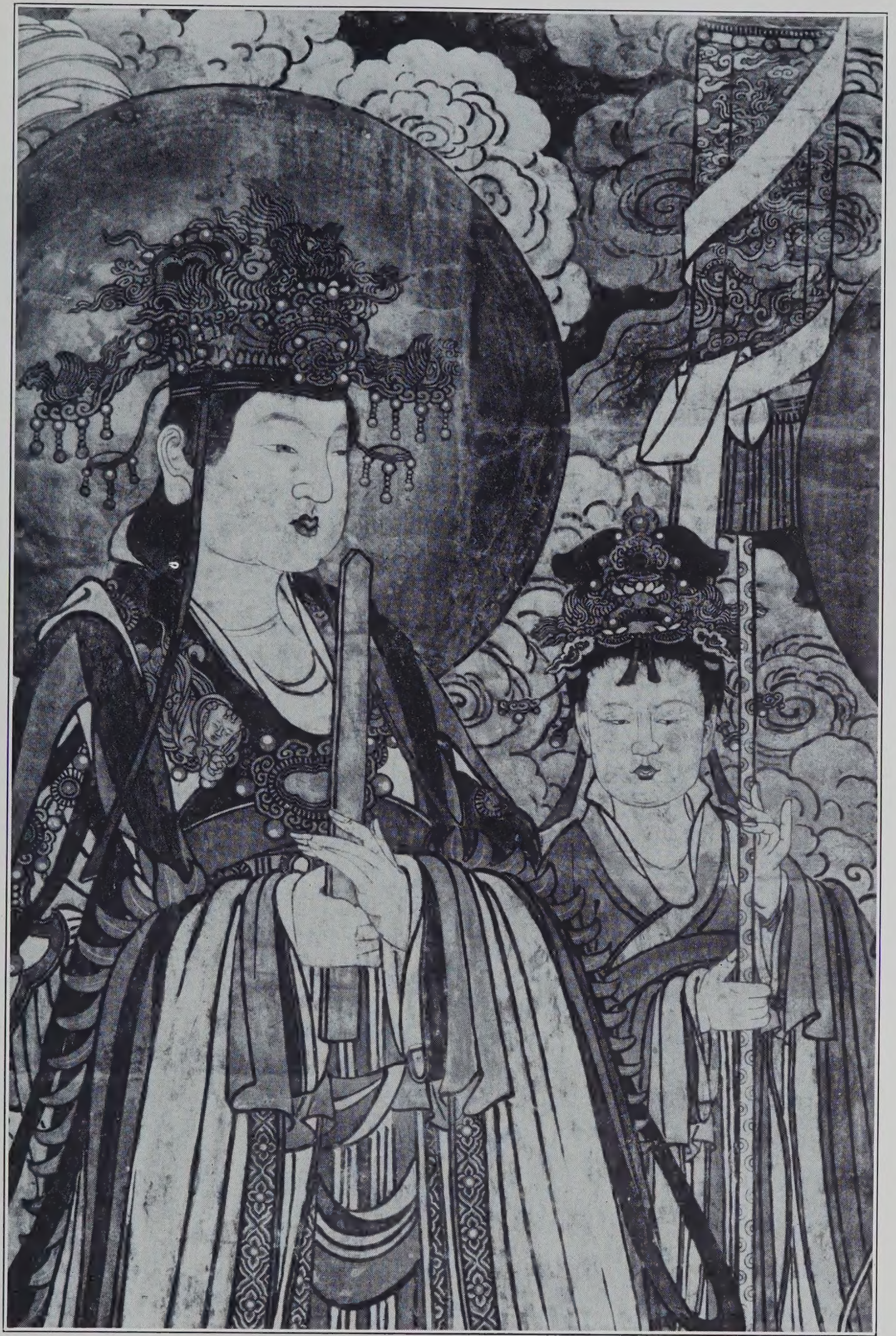
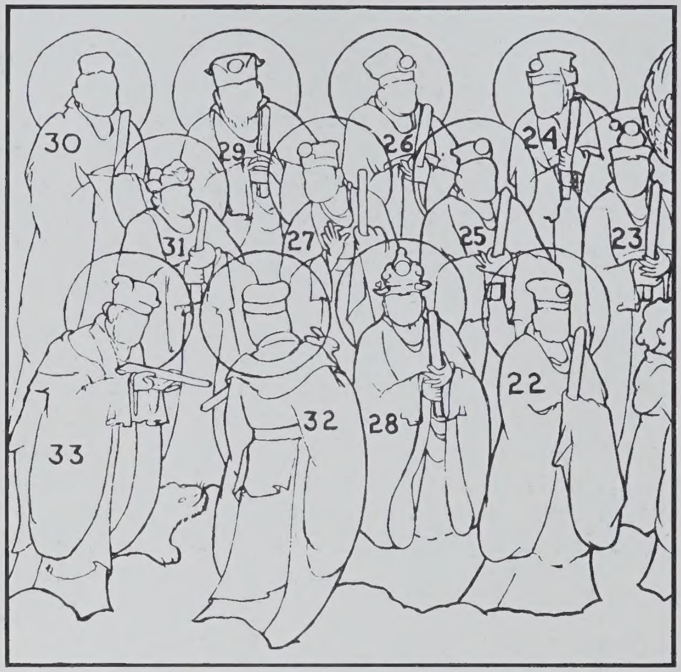


FIGURE 72

Detail from Central Group of the Southern Dipper.



LEFT HAND GROUP

22· President of the Horse Year
23· President of the Goat Year
24· President of the Monkey Year
25· President of the Cock Year
26· President of the Pig Year
27· President of the Snake Year
28· President of the Tiger Year
29· President of the Dragon Year
30· President of the Rat Year
31· President of the Ox Year
32· President of the Hare Year
33· President of the Dog Year

FIGURE 73

Key to the Left-hand Group of the Southern Dipper.

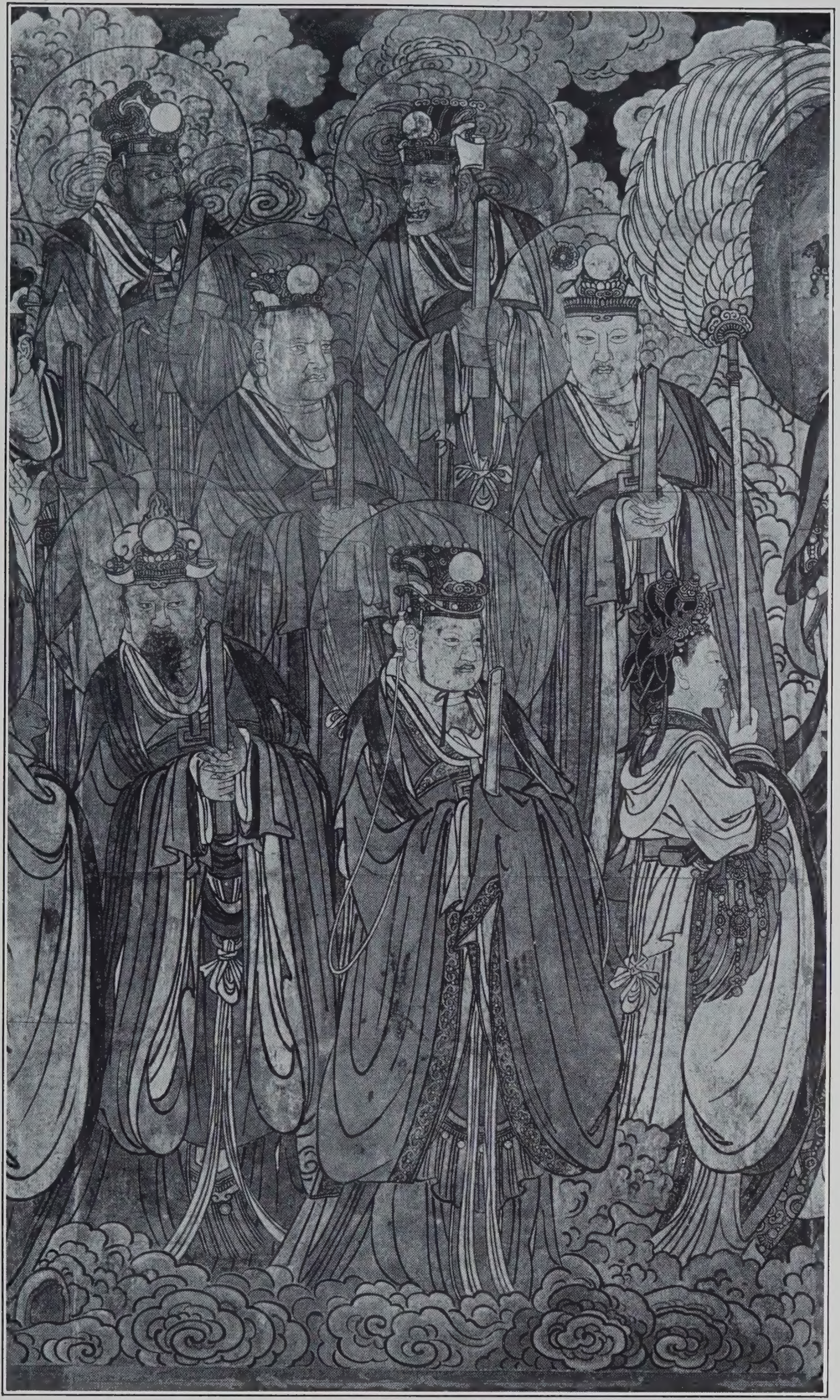


FIGURE 74

Animals of the Years (1) of the Southern Dipper.

The altar is of wood, green in colour, with carved cloud design on the legs, and its surface inlaid probably with white marble. The glass bowl is transparent and of greenish tinge, and has a foot-rim which flares outward. The paeony flowers are white with thick green foliage; and the other spray is of a small-leafed plant with single white flowers, which is doubtless the tea plant in flower. It was during the T'ang Dynasty that the "Tea Classic" (*Ch'a Ching*) was written, and the tea plant at that time was highly respected in connection with ceremonial observances.

17 and 18. Female attendants—the two bearers of the altar.

The outside attendant wears a white robe, a white mantle with blue decorative border lined with green, and a white stole. She wears a red belt with golden plaques, from which a red frontal hangs down, over which fall white streamers. She has green cuff-protectors, and wears simple bracelets. Only the top of the head and face of the inside attendant are seen, and a small piece of her green robe. The hair of both is arranged like that of the two altar-bearers in the other Taoist fresco.

19. A female attendant bearing banner or ceremonial umbrella.

The banner is of green and red, with gem-studded decorative fringe, and with four slender knotted streamers. The staff is white, with green-coloured circle designs. The attendant is wearing a green and gold pectoral, with shoulder ornaments, and has a red belt. She has several hair-pins in her hair, and wears a green tiara. Her clothing is an under-tunic of white, a bronze mantle with green border, and a white stole, while she also wears simple bracelets.

20. A female attendant bearing ceremonial banner.

She wears a white robe with red frontal, a green mantle with yellow border, a red belt, and green cuff-protectors. The banner she carries is red with a green fringe, and is draped round with a white streamer. The design on the banner is a green dragon in the clouds chasing the white sun-pearl, and because of this it may not be the Empress's banner, but the Emperor's, which would carry a dragon. The Empress's banner ordinarily would have a phoenix (*Fig. 43; no. 23*).

21. The bearer of the Empress's ceremonial feathered fan.

This beautiful young attendant of the Empress carries a graceful feathered fan; and on her own robes she wears a wide feathered trimming at the elbow and side. The Empress herself seems to have the same sort of feather decoration. The fan, which is of white feathers, is gracefully shaped in alignment

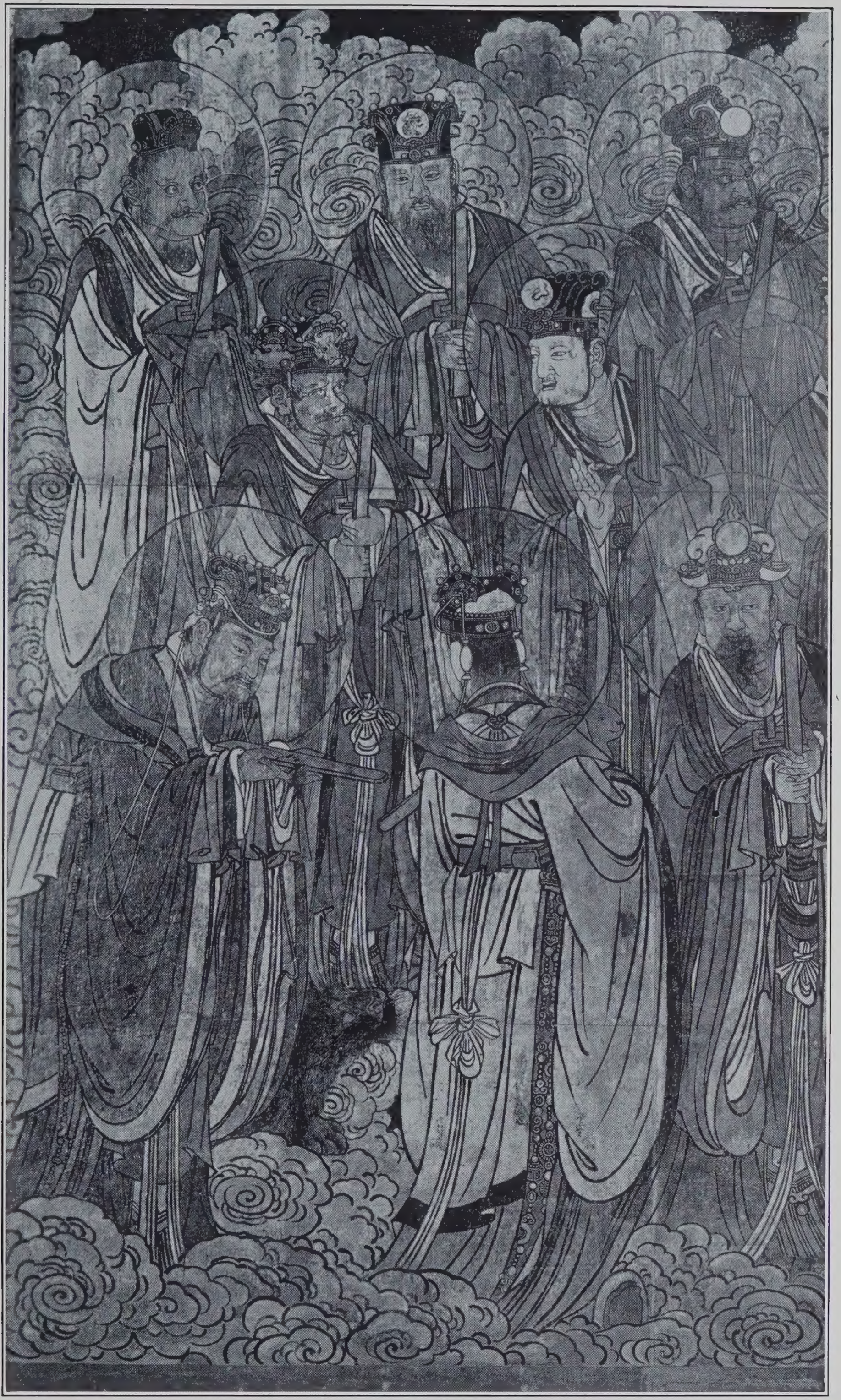


FIGURE 75

Animals of the Years (2) of the Southern Dipper.

with the circle of the halo. She wears a white robe, a white mantle with decorated blue border, a red belt with golden plaques from which hang a kerchief and sash at the back, and has a white stole over her shoulders. The arrangement of the hair, with its jewel-tipped hair-pins, is like that of the other female attendants (*Fig. 71*).

C. The Left-Hand Group

This group includes the twelve Presidents of the Years, each designated by a cyclical character of the Twelve Terrestrial Branches, and carries the name of an animal, which is seen in some form on the respective person. All are dressed in civil official robes, and carry official tablets, "Long-life Lock" pectorals, and cuff-protectors; and wear caps which with some exceptions are equipped with chin ties, ear-protectors, and long cords. With two exceptions each carries in his head-dress the depiction of the animal he represents, the exceptions being No. 33, where the "dog" is at his feet, and No. 32 who carries the "hare" in his arms (*Figs. 75 and 76*).

22. The President of the Horse year—the Branch cycle character *Tzu*.

He wears a white tunic, red mantle with floral border, and a green stole with dark centre lined with yellow.

23. The President of the Goat year—the Branch cycle character *Ch'ou*.

He wears a brown robe, blue mantle with pink border, and a light-green stole with dark-green centre.

24. The President of the Monkey year—the Branch cycle character *Yin*.

His mantle is white with a blue border, and his stole is green.

25. The President of the Cock year—the Branch cycle character *Mao*.

He wears a blue mantle with a brown edging, and his stole is red.

26. The President of the Pig year—the Branch cycle character *Ch'ên*.

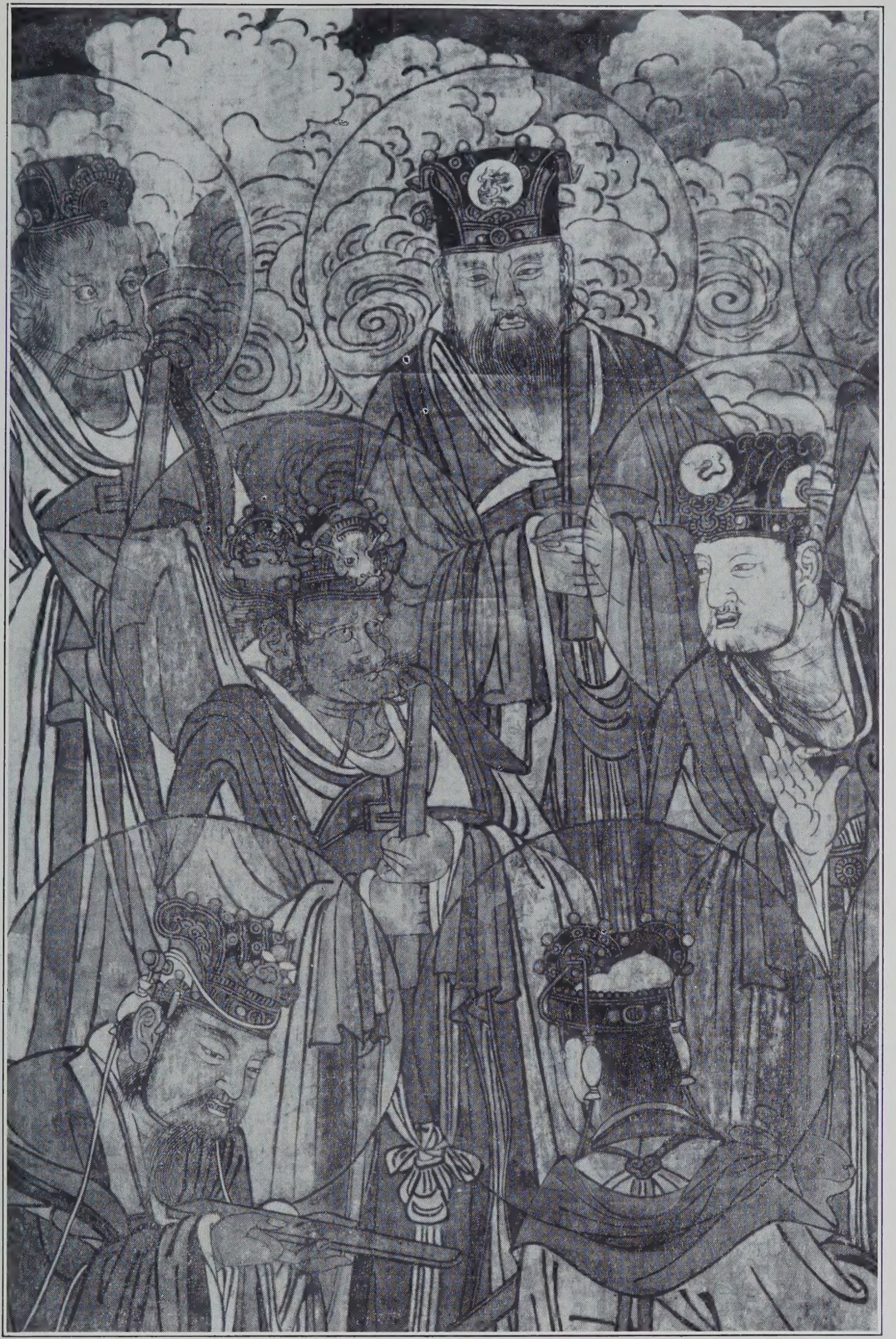


FIGURE 76

Detail of the Animals of the Years.
Head-Dresses show, Left to right: Rat, Dragon, Ox, and Snake.

His mantle is white with a green border, and his stole is green.

27. The President of the Snake year—the Branch cycle character *Ssu.*

He wears a white mantle with blue border, and wears a green stole.

28. The President of the Tiger year—the Branch cycle character *Wu.*

His robe is green, his mantle green with a yellow border, and his stole blue.

29. The President of the Dragon year—the Branch cycle character *Wei.*

His mantle is green with a white border, and his stole is green.

30. The President of the Rat year—the Branch cycle character *Shên.*

He wears a green robe, a white mantle with a blue border, and a blue and green stole.

31. The President of the Ox year—the Branch cycle character *Yu.*

His robe is green, he wears a white mantle with brown border, and his stole is red.

32. The President of the Hare year—the Branch cycle character *Hsü.*

He wears a green robe, a yellow mantle with a blue border, and a green stole. His belt is red with gold plaques, from which hang red streamers and a white kerchief behind.

33. The President of the Dog year—the Branch cycle character *Hai.*

His robe is green, his mantle blue with a yellow border, and his stole green with a dark centre.

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